THE TEMPLES OF INDIA

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India

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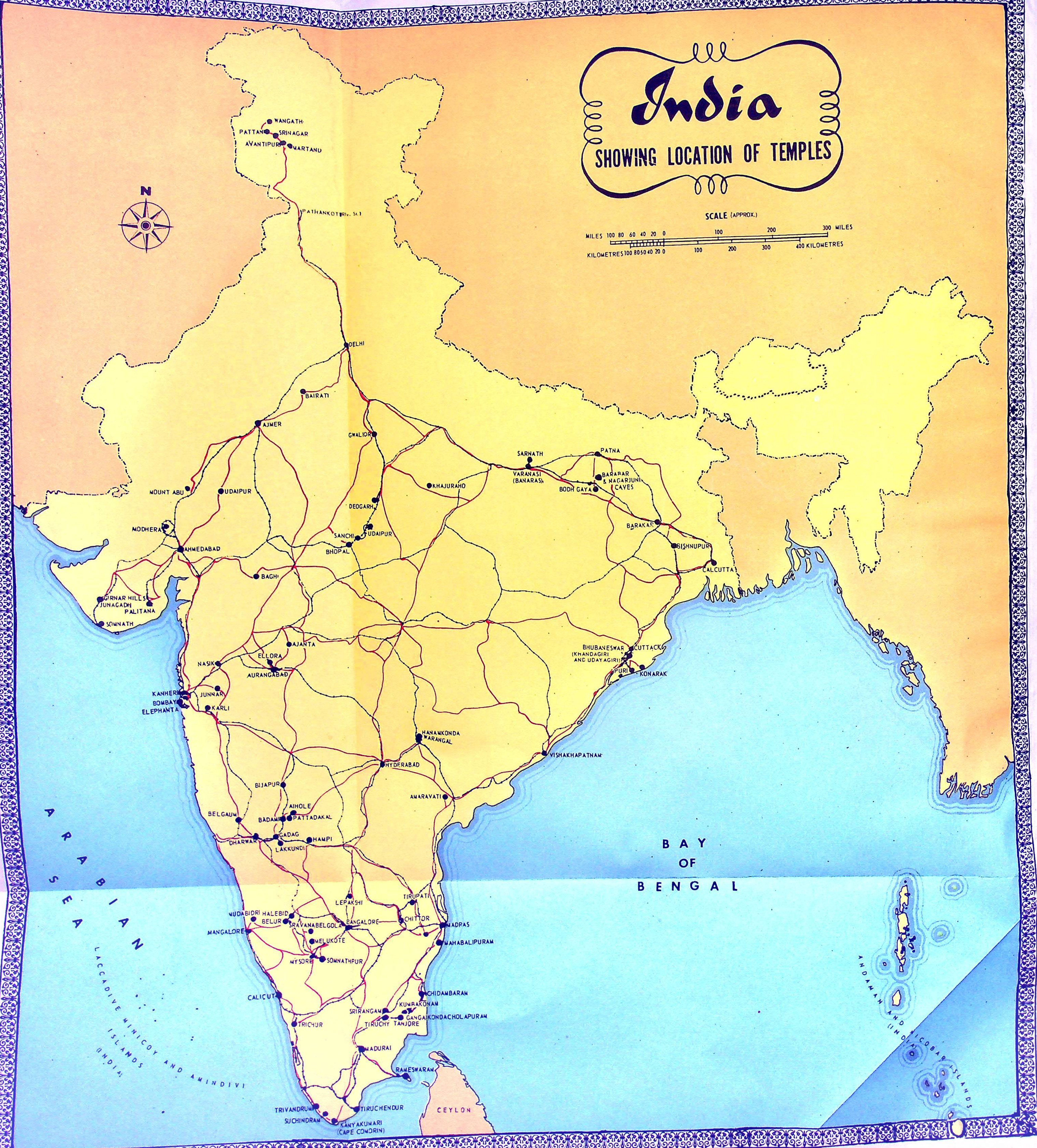
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Introduction

THE Indian temple, like the great cathedrals of Europe, is a phenomenon of an Age of Faith. The imposing temples of India were, like their Christian counterparts in Europe, built mostly between 900 and 1600. Before and after this period many notable temples were built and carved, but they represent only the earlier and later phases of a grand movement.

An Indian temple is not necessarily a Hindu shrine. It can belong to any of the several religious denominations—Buddhist, Hindu, Jain or Sikh. Barring Sikh temples where the only object of veneration is the Sacred Book—*Guru Granth Saheb*- -all others are built to enshrine the images of gods or goddesses or saints. If it is a Buddhist temple, the object of worship is invariably a relic mound called the *stupa* or an image of the Buddha; if Hindu, an important god or goddess of the pantheon, and if Jain, any or all of the twentyfour Tirthankaras who are deified saints. Of the Hindu temples, some are of Vishnu, the great preserver of Life, and some others are of Siva, the ascetic god who destroys Life when, saturated with sin, it becomes unredeemable. Oddly enough, Brahma, the Creator, who with Vishnu and Siva constitutes the Hindu Trinity, has very few temples to his name.

Usually the central object of worship in a Siva temple is the *lingam*, a cylindrical stone symbolizing cosmic energy. In Southern India, Siva is also worshipped as Nataraja, the King of Dancers, in whom the devotee sees the great Cosmic Dance—a concept which has inspired some of the finest masterpieces of Indian sculpture. In Vishnu temples the object of worship is an image of the god either in his original iconographic form (of which there are twentyfour varieties) or in any of his ten earthly incarnations. There are also temples for the consorts of Vishnu and Siva. A very popular deity worshipped by the Hindus is Ganesh (the remover of obstacles) who is Siva's son with the head of an elephant.

Insular Character of the Temple

A tourist from the West who regards India's great temples with the casual inquisitiveness of a visitor may well confess to a feeling of bewilderment and incomprehension. To his unaccustomed eyes they might look incongruous, bizarre, and perhaps even grotesque—so utterly remote are they from the Renaissance tradition, and indeed even from the Near-Eastern building styles. The famous temples of India have nothing in common with the great medieval cathedrals of Europe beyond what is common to all the masterpieces of religious architecture—an impassioned outflow of religious fervour.

India has been the home of a great civilization for 5,000 years or more. Like her mighty rivers her civilization too has absorbed, century after century, many tributaries of culture, some turbid and others pure; but the main current has always remained Indian. Its philosophy, religion, literature, art and architecture have all retained their basic Indianness to a degree that has bordered oddly on the insular. Both as an institution and as architecture, the Indian temple is a product of this insularity. Except for a brief superficial touch of Hellenistic influence in the north-western fringes of the sub-continent 2,300 years ago, Hindu (this includes Buddhist) art and architecture have progressed along tracks cut entirely by native talent. Islam which exercised a powerful and long-standing influence on the ideas and institutions of the country from the 13th century onward could do little to change the traditional character of temple architecture. Modern Europe's earlier contacts with India were hardly noteworthy for their cultural or civilizing influence. So the Indian temple has remained a typically Indian institution, as indigenous as the Pyramids of Egypt or the Parthenon of Athens.

The religious art of ancient India reflected the popular rather than the metaphysical approach to spiritualism. Although rigidly confined by iconographical rules, the gods and goddesses, the saints and ascetics who proliferate the niches, temple walls and towers look handsome, young, cheerful and smiling or serene. Their physical form is often earthy to the point of being sensuous. They are richly apparelled and heavy with weapons and jewellery like royal personages. They have consorts and sometimes children too. They move about on their special mounts of birds or animals. Each is invested with powers to do good or harm. They have fought wars to eradicate evil-minded opponents and have often incarnated themselves on earth to lead mankind into the ways of virtue. So the craftsmen who fashioned the temples and their sculptures depicted their gods as visible symbols of power as it was manifest to them in real life.

The concept of the temple was an extension of the concept of a personal god. The temple was a *Devalaya* or a Residence of God. The deity stood or sat there on a pedestal, ready to receive the prayers and gifts of the devout, not unlike a kindly monarch on his throne who receives the humble tributes and petitions of his loyal subjects.

Parts of a Temple

Before we can appreciate the architecture of the Indian temple it is necessary to know what the principal parts of a temple are. Although there is no architectural similarity between the great cathedrals of Europe and the temples of India, there are some interesting points of comparison between the two. Just as a Gothic church has its chancel, nave, aisles, spire, cloisters, etc., the Indian temple too has its distinguishable parts. Corresponding to the chancel is the temple's *sanctum sanctorum* or *garbha-griha,* meaning 'womb cell.' It is a dark, small square cell where the main deity, invariably carved in stone, is installed. On the roof of this cell rises the *sikhara* or tower, also called the *vimana,* which has its architectural counterpart in the spire of a Gothic Church. The doorway of the sanctum which always faces eastward opens into another rectangular chamber which is called the *antarala* or vestibule. The vestibule is the intermediate chamber between the sanctum and a pillared hall called *mandapa* where devotees gather at the time of worship. Even the largest of these *mandapas* do not, however, compare in size with the vast congregational halls of a Gothic church. Entrance to the mandapa is by a porch called *ardha-mandapa.* In a fully formed temple there may be a transept on each side of the central hall known as the *maha-mandapa.* A typical example of the fully integrated style may be seen in the Khandariya Mahadeva temple at Khajuraho in Central India. Each of the principal parts of this structure is crowned by a pyramidal tower, their heights carefully graded so that the tallest is the tower on the sanctum and the shortest, the one on the porch. All round the sanctum is a passage meant for circumambulation by the worshippers. If it happens to be a Siva temple, there is a pavilion in front of the porch dedicated to Nandi, the bull-mount of the god. Between the Nandi pavilion and the porch stands a tall banner-post symbolizing the authority of the deity enshrined in the sanctum. It is common for most of the big temples to be provided with an enclosing wall. Some of them, the more elaborate ones, have a cloistered setting with a range of cells running right round the enclosing wall and facing the temple.

Spirit of Architecture

In its architecture and the spirit underlying it, the temple had not merely to be different from the residence of ordinary men but had also to dominate its surroundings. The upward thrust of the sanctum tower was symbolic of its spiritual eminence. Nevertheless it stood solidly and firmly on the ground like a broad-based pyramid amidst supplementary structures enclosed within a high wall. While the tower loudly announced the presence of God, at close range the temple overwhelmed the faithful by the variety and wealth of carvings on its walls, pillars and ceilings. The temple itself became one enormous piece of sculpture and its architectural features were often subordinated to the carvers' skill. Figures of gods and goddesses, lovely maidens, floral motifs, elephants, horses, chariots, battle scenes, dwarfs and demons, stories from legends and myths and often enough provocative erotic themes—all these sought to picture before the faithful the righteous ways of the gods and the sins of evil-doers. In short, the religious faith that the architecture of the temple evokes does not spring from a cynical denial of life but from its warmest depths. In the presentation of this idea the Hindu temple-builder was content to be governed by established conventions rather than his inventive genius.

Long conditioned by a philosophy of self-abnegation, the men who built these temples and carved their details rarely announced their names.

So most of these structures have remained anonymous. To these temple-builders art was neither purely secular nor religious. It was all one, basically religious and symbolic. The architecture of the temple only sought to convey, in spatial terms, the intensity of their longing to identify the divine with the real.

Temple, the Hub of Social Life

On this account the temple became far more than a mere place of worship. It was the centre of all cultural and social life. Its structure dominated the surroundings both by its location and size. Its solidity and mass gave a sense of permanence to all other institutions whose main function, like that of the temple, was preservation of traditional values. Every village and town grew round the temple which was the hub of all activity. Its influence extended beyond the purely religious and spiritual realms and made the temple an important factor in the economy of the village. The temple deity was a leading landowner, and received generous gifts from kings, chiefs, merchants and the common people, in addition to some local taxes. Temples thus became rich enough to function as banks which could lend money to needy agriculturists. The daily routine of temple ritual gave assured employment to a large number of people—priests, learned men, musicians, dancing girls, teachers, florists, tailors, clerks, accountants and functionaries of various kinds.

A temple festival was an occasion of great social rejoicing and people converged there from surrounding towns and villages to participate in the general merriment. These festivals ended up as fairs, often lasting two days or more. Merchants brought their goods from long distances for sale or barter.

The age of the temples was also an age in which scholastic learning was recognized as the highest intellectual pursuit. Debates and discourses were held in the temple premises among scholars who sought to gain thereby recognition and renown. The precincts of the temples were often the only venue for public entertainment. Wrestling matches and music and dance recitals enlivened the special occasions of temple ceremony. The rich and the poor alike had the benefit of these entertainments. Attached to the temples were schools or *pathashalas* where pupils learnt everything from the three R's to literature, theology, philosophy and ethics. The local assembly or *panchayat* met there to discuss municipal affairs or adjudicate personal disputes. The very fact that elections to local bodies or the hearing of civil disputes were conducted in the presence of the deity invested the proceedings with an atmosphere of solemnity.

India was dotted with thousands of temples at the time Islam gained a firm foothold in North and North-Western India; but having been relatively free from iconoclastic upheavals, the country south of the Vindhyas was able to protect a larger number of its religious monuments from wanton destruction or calculated negligence. This historical circumstance accounts for the fact that the development of the art of temple-building in the South continued longer than in the North and remained free from the arresting influences which came to dominate North India from the 13th century onwards.

Apart from the famous temple towns, a good number of villages and towns in India have two or more temples, some so ancient and venerated that they have become places of pilgrimage. A large majority of the existing temples are simple, unostentatious structures with no great artistic merit. The really great ones are monuments of considerable antiquity, sometimes as much as twelve or thirteen hundred years old. Besides their antiquity, there is the interesting fact that these temples have gone through a long evolutionary process documenting, as it were, the country's cultural history.

Early Beginnings

Of India's secular or religious architecture before the 5th century very little remains, not because great structures did not exist but because they were almost invariably built of bricks and wood. Writing of the palace of Chandragupta Maurya (grandfather of Ashoka and contemporary of Alexander the Great), Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador at his court, said that it was a big and luxurious structure built of wood, and beautifully carved and gilded. The big monolithic columns which the emperor Ashoka set up at various places are proof that the craftsmen of those days were capable of using stone as effectively as they did wood. But grand structures in stone, either for secular or religious purposes, had not come into vogue. When they started using this lasting building material centuries later they did no better than imitate wooden constructions.

Stupas

The earliest surviving religious structures are the Buddhist Stupas. The stupa is a large burial mound, hemispherical in shape, with a central chamber in which a small casket containing the relics of the Buddha are preserved. The core of the mound was of unburnt brick, its outer face of burnt brick, and the entire structure was given a thick plaster skin. On top of the hemisphere stood the *harmika*, a stylized umbrella of stone or wood. A fence (made first of wood but later replaced by stone) ran round the stupa enclosing a path for the ritual of circumambulation. Some of the stupas as at Sanchi (2nd century B.C.) were provided with beautiful entrance arches (*torana*) at the four cardinal points. Smaller stupas and monasteries and theological colleges gradually sprang up round the main stupa, converting the site into a colony of monks and learned men.

Not many of the great stupas of ancient India have survived. The biggest and best preserved is the Sanchi stupa in Madhya Pradesh, and the other at Sarnath near Banaras. The stupas built in later years such as the one at Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh—which no longer exists—tended to become bigger in size and more ornate. A similar movement towards larger stupas was noticeable at the same time in other Buddhist countries like Burma, Ceylon and Indonesia.

Rock-Cut Architecture

Side by side with the stupa architecture of the pre-Christian era, a novel type of 'cave' architecture developed in parts of northern, eastern and western India and the Deccan. This cave or rock-cut style developed in time into a country-wide architectural movement, and innumerable shrines and monasteries were cut into picturesquely situated hills where Buddhist and Jain monks could spend their time in scholarly seclusion. Rock-cut architecture of very ancient times is to be found in Egypt, Assyria and Iran. The Greeks had it in Lycia and, the Nabataeans in Petra, in Palestine. But nowhere did this unique form of architecture take such strong root in the aesthetic traditions of a country as it did in India where it spread into a countrywide movement and blossomed into magnificent creations of imaginative endeavour. India is estimated to have over 1,200 of these rock-excavations executed between the 3rd century B.C. and the 9th century A.D. Some of them are works of enormous dimensions. The great *chaitya* at Karle is 124 ft. long, 45 ft. wide and 46 ft. high. The main body of the great rock-cut temple of Kailash at Ellora occupies a parallelogram approximately 150 ft. by 100 ft., and 90 ft. high.

The rock-cut technique of architecture caught the imagination of peoples even beyond the confines of India who came under the influence of Mahayana Buddhism. In the Bamian Valley (West of Kabul in Afghanistan), on the main highway from Central Asia to India, sculptors of the second and third centuries carved enormous images on the cliffs and monastic retreats nearby for the community of Buddhist monks. Later, with the spread of Mahayana Buddhism in China rock-cut chapels and monasteries, complete with sculptures and frescoes, also became popular in that country. The caves of Yun-Kang (about 450-500 A.D.) with their heavily sculptured interiors, the Lung-Men caves in Honan (6th century A.D.) and the Caves of Tun Huang with their world-famous wall paintings are some of the well known examples of rock-cut architecture in China.

The earlier or the Hinayana (meaning 'Lesser Vehicle') phase of Buddhism when the bodily form of the Buddha had not come to be worshipped, lasted for about 400 years till the 2nd century A.D. After an interval of about 250 years, the vogue for rock-hewn architecture again gathered momentum. In this latter phase both Hinduism and Jainism freely adopted this technique of excavation to find lasting abodes for their gods and deities.

Most of the Hinayana rock-cut chapels and monasteries of the earlier period are confined to the western Deccan although a few notable examples are found on the Barabar and Nagarjuna hills near Gaya. Within a radius of 200 miles round Nasik in Maharashtra are to be found a large number of cave chapels (*chaityas*) and monasteries (*viharas*). The popularity of rock-hewn architecture in western Deccan is due to the excellent quality of rock available in these hilly regions. Of these cave retreats, the *chaityas* are the more noteworthy because they are imitations of vaulted wooden structures which were common in those times.

The *chaitya* is an apsidal hall excavated into solid rock with rows of pillars running along the walls. These pillars support a curved roof resting on ribs in imitation of the barrel vaulting of a wooden structure. All these *chaityas* regardless of their date have a common architectural pattern, with colonnades, apsidal ends, and the horseshoe shaped archway. The more outstanding of these early Buddhist chapels in Maharashtra are the ones at Bhaja, Kondane, Pitalkora, Ajanta (Caves number 9 and 10), Bedsa, Nasik, Karle, Junnar and Kanheri. The tourist might not find time to visit all of them, but the caves of Bedsa, Karle and Ajanta deserve to be seen, particularly for the spirited figure-sculptures on the pillar capitals and the wall spaces between the doorways.

Excavated near the chapels are the *viharas* or monastic retreats which were the living quarters of monks who preferred to spend their conventual life in rocky fastnesses far from cities and towns. From their simple beginnings as small, detached cells, these monasteries evolved into a full complement of rooms arranged round a main hall. The cave monasteries of Nasik are the most decorative of the early examples.

Remains of early Buddhist rock-cut sanctuaries are to be found along the lower reaches of the Krishna and Godavari rivers in Andhra. The Guntupalli caves in the Krishna District (2nd century B.C.) and the Sankaran Caves in the Visakhapatnam District (4th century A.D.) are the better known examples. Most of these are faithful replicas of wooden structures commonly in use at that time. The early Indian builder did not abandon this imitative approach even in later centuries when rock-cut architecture acquired greater sophistication. The prototype reproduction of wooden buildings became so conventionalized that constructional architecture of even the 15th-16th century temples retains its umbilical contact with the rock-cut architecture of a thousand years earlier.

Caves of Ajanta, Ellora and Elephanta

For the masterpieces of rock-architecture one has to go to Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra. From Aurangabad, which in itself is a well-known tourist destination with its ancient Buddhist caves and Mughal monuments, Ajanta is 66 miles by road, and Ellora, 18 miles. The thirty rock-hewn monasteries of Ajanta, cut into the scarp of a sickle-shaped cliff, overlook a picturesque ravine with a charming little stream flowing through it. The earliest of these excavations, consisting of two Buddhist chapels (Caves 9 and 10) and four monastic retreats (Caves 8, 12, 13 and 30) date back to the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C. After an interval of about four hundred years the rock-cut technique once again came to be revived with a new-found zeal and twenty-four more caves were added. Sixteen of them are famous for their frescoes which are the earliest surviving paintings in the whole of Asia, barring pre-historic art. A thousand years of neglect and exposure to the elements has damaged the greater part of these paintings.

But those which have survived in four of the principal *viharas* (Caves 1, 2, 16 and 17) can be ranked among the great artistic masterpieces of the ancient world.

These paintings depict the pulsating world of fifteen centuries ago when the yellow-robed monks of Buddhism sought a home in the seclusion of this ravine for study and meditation. The themes of these paintings are all derived from the many stories connected with the Buddha. We see in them the elegant timber-built interiors of spacious palace halls peopled by bejewelled princes and princesses, retinues of attendants ever-eager to serve them, music-loving *apsaras* floating in the clouds, fur-capped foreign emissaries on unknown missions, shaven-headed yellow-robed monks, snake-charmers, dwarfs, sea-going masted vessels carrying men and merchandise, scampering monkeys, flying birds, strutting peacocks, elephants sporting in lotus ponds, fighting bulls, palms and flower-gardens and a host of other images that dominated the world of the unnamed artists who laboured for years with their colours and brushes in reflected sunlight to create this priceless record.

The widespread patronage to rock-cut architecture that the fifth century witnessed in Western Deccan continued for a little over three hundred years. To this later phase belong the remarkable cave temples of Ellora near Aurangabad and Elephanta off the shores of Bombay.

About the beginning of the seventh century the Mahayana Buddhists had already excavated *viharas* into the Ellora hills. Soon after, Hindu masons also started cutting columned halls into the face of these hills in much the same style as the Buddhists had done. The Brahmanical excavations along the western face of the Ellora hill are sixteen in number, and of these, the principal ones are the *Ravana-ki-Khai* or Abode of Ravana, the *Dasavatara* or Ten Incarnations of Vishnu, the Kailasa, the Ramesvara and the Dhumar Lena, also called *Sita's Nahani* or Sita's Bath.

The Dasavatara is the simplest of them, being designed after a Buddhist monastery. It is an open courtyard of irregular shape, and has a detached shrine in the centre. Beyond this hall the temple presents a facade of a double-storeyed structure. Each of the floors is a pillared hall, and in the niches on the surrounding walls are figure-sculptures of immense size depicting themes relating to Siva and Vishnu.

The Ravana-ki-Khai is rectangular in plan. Most of the space is occupied by a pillared hall. The capitals of the pillars prominently display the 'vase and foliage' motif. The sculptures within the hall including the *dvarapalas* (celestial guardians) and other figure compositions in the pillared recesses of the walls are virile and bold productions.

The Ramesvara cave has rich carvings on the walls. The veranda facade is extremely impressive, much of the effect being due to its powerful pillars with the familiar pot and foliage capitals and the magnificently decorated bracket figures of dryads and goddesses. Within the cave are to be found some of the best figure sculptures of this period. Of these the panels depicting the Goddess Durga, and the Dance of Siva are outstanding.

The Dhumar Lena has a striking resemblance to the Elephanta caves (near Bombay) though it is a little larger and more impressive. The entrance to the cave is by a flight of steps guarded by ferocious-looking lions. The interior has twenty-six massive pillars. The main shrine dedicated to Siva is a quadrangular chamber situated at the back of the hall, and each of the four sides is guarded by a pair of brobdingnagian door-keepers. Among the fine sculptured panels in the interior the one depicting the Marriage of Siva and Parvati is an outstanding work.

Kailasa Temple

The most remarkable of all the excavations of Ellora is the temple of Kailasa. A creation in which thousands of skilled stone-cutters must have obviously revelled, the Kailasa is the achievement of an audacious visionary who saw in art the culmination of religious devotion and a challenge to transience. We see in this temple a departure from the older tradition of excavated subterranean halls to a new, bold experiment in which a large-scale replica of a structural temple is scooped out of a solid hill.

In area approximately twice that of the Parthenon at Athens, and in height one and a half times as much, the Kailasa Temple shows a distinct advance in rock-cut architecture. If the conception of an excavated temple of this magnitude was bold it must have required an even bolder patron to have undertaken the work.

The Rashtrakuta king, Krishna Raya I (757- 783) had obviously the confidence and resources to take it up.

The Kailasa Temple is entirely the work of stone-carvers. They first dug a deep three-sided trench from above the hill to obtain a massive, isolated block of rock, 200 ft. long, 100 ft. wide and 100 ft. high. Having thus obtained the rocky mass from which the temple was to be fashioned, the artisans started working from the top and front. As architects delineated the different parts of the temples, sculptors carved out the details.

The temple consists of four parts: the main shrine, the entrance gate to the west, an intermediate shrine for Nandi (the mount of Siva) and the cloisters surrounding the courtyard. The temple stands on a lofty plinth, 25 ft. high, heavily moulded both at the top and the bottom. In between the two runs an imposing frieze of elephants and lions seeming to support the entire superstructure on their backs. A flight of steps leads to the pillared porch which also stands on a plinth. The temple combines all the known elements of temple architecture—the pilasters, niches, cornices and the tower over the sanctum. More Pallava than Chalukyan, the 95-ft. tower is a replica of a three-tiered structure with a projecting gable front, and surmounted by a shapely cupola. Around the base of the *sikhara* are grouped five miniature shrines, each being a model of the main shrine.

The interior of the temple consists of the sanctum, a vestibule and a hall of sixteen pillars. In front of the pillared hall is an elegant Nandi shrine, 20 ft. square. It stands on a high plinth which is connected with the main temple by a bridge. The main entrance to the Kailasa Temple is a double-storeyed structure of ample proportions. Adjacent to the Nandi shrine on either side are two *dhvaja-stambhas* (banner columns) which are detached pillars, 51 ft. high. They are well-proportioned and exquisitely finished.

If the Kailasa Temple is considered unique for its rock-cut architecture it holds the ground equally proudly for its sculptured panels. Some of them are as great as the famous sculptures of the Elephanta Caves near Bombay. A remarkable example of draftsmanship is the panel devoted to a mythical theme in which the demon-king Ravana seeks to uproot Kailasa, the Himalayan abode of Siva. On the exterior of the central court we find a rather interesting panel of intricate relief-sculptures running in horizontal bands, depicting the mythological story of the *Ramayana.*

The cave temples of Elephanta, found on a beautiful little island about seven miles from Bombay, belong to the latest phase of rock-cut architecture (about 850 A.D.). Carved in the same style as the Ellora Caves, Elephanta is famous for its enormous sculpture of Siva showing him as the Trimurti or embodiment of the Hindu Trinity. Other panels, all depicting well-known mythological themes from the life of Siva, are mutilated in parts, but they still convey the aggressive vigour which characterized Hindu revivalism in the 8th and 9th centuries.

Evolution of Structural Temples

There are very few examples of free-standing early temples, but from those that exist as at Bairat near Jaipur (about 250 B.C.) it is evident that they were small and simple structures of brick and wood. There are a few scattered examples of temples built during the age of the Imperial Guptas (350 to 500 A.D.). These are small, usually flat-roofed, and have ornate pillars. At a place called Deogarh near Jhansi there is a rare Gupta temple with a small tower on the sanctum. Easier for the tourist to see is the elegant, flat-roofed Gupta temple at Sanchi (near Bhopal). It has a pillared porch and a walled sanctum resembling, to some extent, an ancient Greek shrine.

These simple structures of the earlier period came to assume, towards the end of the seventh century, a definitive and more purposeful form. Each part of the temple structure came to conform to the needs of an increasingly elaborate ritual of worship.

In the following pages we shall discuss the principal temples of India, grouping them under regional styles.

Eastern India

Orissa

Under the name of Kalinga, Orissa was the seat of great empires as far back as 300 B.C. In the course of its history several kings founded great cities and built magnificent temples, some of which still survive to vouch for the remarkable architectural achievements of Orissa.

Although Orissa has a fairly large variety of temples, they share a basic architectural quality. They are compact, homogeneous structures, built in the best traditions of what is known as the Nagara or Indo-Aryan style.

The temple-building movement in Orissa which started early in the 8th century reached its peak of excellence in the 10th and 11th centuries and continued up to the end of the 13th century. Although most of the great surviving examples of this group are confined to Bhubaneswar, Puri and Konarak, this style flourished along the entire coast as far south as Ganjam in Andhra Pradesh, and the southern borders of Bengal and Bihar in the north. Together, these temples illustrate more coherently than any other in Northern India the growth and development of an independent regional style of architecture in which, barring a few earlier examples, pillars are conspicuous by their absence.

Generally speaking, all Orissan temples follow a common structural plan. The typical Orissan temple consists of two apartments. The *deul*, corresponding to the *vimana* or towered sanctuary of the Southern style, is the cubical inner apartment which enshrines the image, and is surmounted by a tower. In front of this is the *antarala* or vestibule, also called the *jagmohan*, which is usually square in plan and has a pyramidal roof. Occasionally, one or two more pavilions such as the *nat-mandir* and the *bhog-mandir*, were added in front of the *jagmohan*, but these, where they exist, were superimpositions on the original plan.

Bhubaneswar has a rich profusion of temples. This striking concentration of temples is partly accounted for by the fact that the city was the seat of powerful religions. The sacred lake of Bhubaneswar, we are told, was once ringed by 7,000 shrines, of which barely 500 now survive in different stages of preservation.

Several notable examples of the early period of Orissan architecture are to be found in Bhubaneswar itself. Of these, the best preserved is the Parasurameshwar Temple, a small structure consisting of a towered sanctum and a flat-roofed pillared hall, the two joined in a rather haphazard manner. Perhaps built a little later but very different from the Parasurameshwar is another small temple, the Vittal Deul. Its keel-roofed sanctum tower is somewhat reminiscent of the Southern or Dravidian style and also of the architecture of the Buddhist Chaitya from which it has obviously derived its inspiration.

Lingaraja Temple, Bhubaneswar

The great Lingaraja Temple, believed to have been built about 1000 A.D., is acclaimed as the finest example of a Hindu temple in Eastern India. It stands amidst a cluster of 65 smaller shrines in a spacious compound 520 ft. by 465 ft. and its mighty tower (*vimana*) dominates the landscape for miles around. Constructed without mortar, this tower is 127 feet high and is divided into vertical sections. The angles of the recesses are filled in with replica turrets in miniature. The central *vimana* is hollow and consists of several superimposed chambers accessible by a stairway built through the wall which is seven-foot thick. The temple, as originally designed, consisted of the *vimana*, called *sri-mandir*, where the image of Tribhubaneswar, (the Lord of the Three Worlds) popularly called Lingaraja, is housed, and the *jagmohan* or the audience hall. The *nat-mandir* or dance hall (which is usually the middle structure) and the *bhog-mandir* (the refectory hall) were probably added a century or so later, although they are in perfect harmony with the architectural scheme as a whole.

A peculiar characteristic of the Orissan temples is that their interiors are devoid of ornament, while the outer walls of the building are lavishly carved and embellished with sculptures some of which rank among the best specimens of plastic art.

Among the other notable temples in the neighbourhood are those of Bhagavati, Parvati, Ananta-Basudeva, Brahmesvar, Bhaskareswar, and Kedareswar.

Belonging to a later period of Orissan architecture (1100-1250 A. D.) is the Rajrani Temple with plastic decoration and certain other features, such as the *deul* (the towered sanctuary) which suggests a strong kinship with the Central Indian style represented at Khajuraho. It is built of yellowish sandstone, locally called *rajrania*, which accounts for its somewhat unusual name.

The various parts of the temple are not in the same alignment, but follow a diagonal arrangement which might have set the fashion for regional styles.

A small but exceedingly elegant temple at Bhubaneswar is the Mukteswar Temple, representing the middle period of the Orissan style in its early prime and built slightly earlier (about 975) than the Lingaraja Temple. In many ways it is a gem of Orissan architecture, with graceful proportions and beautiful finish. The arched gateway or *torana* is an artistic masterpiece, elegantly designed and executed with great skill.

Jagannath Temple, Puri

Another notable example of the middle period is the well-known temple of Jagannath at Puri (37 miles from Bhubaneswar), a much larger and somewhat later structure than the Lingaraja Temple, although both these great structures are built on more or less the same principle.

The temple is a complex of four structures in an east-west alignment—the *bhog-mandir*, the *nat-mandir*, the *jagmohan* and the *deul* or the inner sanctuary, the last of which is surmounted by a conical tower 192 ft. high. The *nat-mandir* has a ceiling supported by iron beams, and this, along with the *bhog-mandir* is believed to have been added in the 14th or 15th century, long after the original structure was completed. The former, with its 16 pillars, is the only real example of a hypostyle hall in Orissan architecture.

In the inner sanctuary are the three holy images of Jagannath, his brother Balabhadra, and his sister Subhadra.

The entrance to the shrine is decorated with scenes from the life of Krishna, and the gates and walls are heavily ornamented with marble figures of lions and sentries. The profuse decoration on the walls of the *nat-mandir* and *bhog-mandir*, stylized and comparatively lifeless, clearly belongs to a period when Orissa's art had started to decline.

To preserve the temple from the corroding effects of sea wind, parts of the stone masonry and the elaborate carvings have been covered with thick plaster. Crowned with Vishnu's flag and wheel, the tower, however, retains its commanding appearance in spite of the heavy cement overlay.

Distributed around the main building are some 30 to 40 shrines of various dimensions and designs, as in the case of the Lingaraja Temple, but at Puri these secondary structures are grouped on a higher ground, somewhat reminiscent of the early Buddhist stupas.

Sun Temple, Konarak

The supreme achievement of Orissa's architectural genius is the Sun Temple at Konarak, about 20 miles north-east of Puri. Built during the reign of the Eastern Ganga King Narasimha Deva I (1238-64), the temple is now in ruins, the heap of weather-beaten masonry forming a landmark which the sailors called the Black Pagoda because of its colour.

The great tower of this temple, which must have stood over 200 ft. high, has fallen but the assembly hall is still intact. The Konarak temple is conceived of as a *rath* or chariot of the Sun god, drawn by seven caparisoned horses. The base of the temple is an immense terrace with twelve giant wheels, each ten feet high, on either side. On the raised platform thus created the temple building was erected in two conjoined parts forming the sanctum and the vestibule. The *nat-mandir* and the *bhog-mandir* were detached structures all enclosed within a courtyard measuring 865 ft. by 540 ft.

Exquisite sculptures embellish the immense outer surfaces of this architectural masterpiece. The exterior has been chiselled and moulded either into abstract designs or fantastic human and animal forms, and every motif and subject known to the Hindu mind has been drawn upon. The sculptures, executed in hard stone, are large, vigorous and full of the warmth of life. Some of them depict erotic themes. These controversial love themes are later day encrustations on the mystic symbolism of Hindu religion which in its more popular manifestations had absorbed a good deal of Tantrism, a cult which attributes mystic significance to sex.

Bengal

Bengal has been the home of several great civilizations, but their architectural remains, considering the extent of the country, are extremely scanty, largely on account of the nature of the soil and the climate both of which encourage rapid growth of jungle vegetation, so destructive of deserted buildings.

Of the ruined temples in the districts of Bankura and Burdwan enough remains to establish their kinship with the virile temples of Bhubaneswar. A distinctive feature of the former is the absence of a portico.

There is a group of temples at Barakar in Burdwan which are believed to have been built in the 10th and 11th centuries by the Pala Kings. The Siddheswara Temple at Behulara in the Bankura district dates from the 10th century and is the most ornate of this group. Terracotta reliefs adorn its entire brick surface, but the lavish decoration merely emphasizes the elegance of its lines.

Along with the building movement described above, there was an indigenous style of building, approaching a kind of folk architecture, which was widely prevalent in southern Bengal. This type of structure was derived from the thatched bamboo hut so common in Bengal. The curved cornice and eave which are special features of these temples are directly descended from the bamboo framework of the huts of the common people, originally bent into this shape in order to throw off the frequent and heavy rains.

Bishnupur in the Bankura district has a group of such temples, undoubtedly built during the days of the Malla Rajas who are known to have encouraged temple-building. The Lalgiri Temple is built in laterite, has a single tower, and probably dates from 1658. The Madan Mohan Temple is in brick and was erected in 1694. The Shyam Rai (1643) and the Madan Gopal (1665) built in brick and laterite respectively have five towers and are of the *panchayatana* (temple with five shrines) type.

The external decoration of these temples, particularly of those constructed in brick, consists of square panels of terracotta reliefs, the subject-matter of which is often secular and thus of considerable sociological interest.

The *Jor-Bangla* or double temple is a structural variation of the same type and resembles two thatched huts joined together and surmounted by a single tower. The Krishnaraya Temple built at Bishnupur in 1726 and the Chaitanya Temple at Guhapara in the Hooghly district are typical examples.

A single hall or *thakurbari*, on one side of which is the *vedi* or altar, is the main feature of the interior of these buildings. Above this is an upper gallery running round the circuit of the *thakurbari*.

Of the comparatively recent temples near Calcutta, that of the goddess Kali in the Kalighat area, the Dakshineswar Temple of Kali, where Sri Ramakrishna was once the priest, the Belur Temple four miles north of Howrah, and the Vishnu Temple at Bansberia (1679) are noteworthy.

There are four Jain temples built in the late 19th century in Badridas Temple Street in Calcutta. The most important of these is dedicated to Shree Sheetalnathji, the 10th of the 24 Jain deities. Architecturally they are very different from the traditional Bengali style and they resemble more Burmese pagodas than any Indian temple.

Temple of Bodh Gaya

Most of the existing temples of India being Hindu monuments, it is difficult to imagine that in the 12th century there were innumerable Buddhist temples and monastic establishments, particularly in Northern India. Most of them have now disappeared. One reason for this was the iconoclasm of Islam and the other, the decline of the Buddhist faith in the face of the growing popularity of the Hindu religion. Among the great Buddhist temples of the medieval period, one solitary example remains at Bodh Gaya.

The Bodh Gaya temple is typical of the Mahayana architecture that developed in the Gangetic region during the first millennium. As it stands today, its architectural form is a modified version of what it must have been in the 10th century. Its falling walls have been reinforced and restored many times by devout Buddhists.

The building consists of a plinth on which rests a square pyramidal tower, measuring 180 feet from the ground. Each corner of the plinth has a small replica of the Central tower (built at a later period) resembling a five-shrined Hindu temple. The front of the building has a large niche in which an impressive image of the preaching Buddha is enshrined. The image must originally have been approached by a tall flight of steps, and the entire structure enclosed within a railing approached through an arched gateway or *torana*. Within the courtyard there is an Ashokan lion pillar on each side of which is a colossal *yaksha* figure.

Central India

Khajuraho Group

One of the most developed and refined expressions of the Indo-Aryan architectural genius is to be found in the group of temples at Khajuraho in Bundelkhand in Madhya Pradesh. Of the 85 temples originally built by the Chandella Rajputs between 950 and 1050 only about 20 remain in a good state of preservation. Unlike the temples in Orissa, these shrines are not the result of an evolutionary process spread over several centuries, but rather of a brilliant spurt of religious feeling and aesthetic talent.

A unique feature of the Khajuraho temples is that, contrary to custom, they are not enclosed within a wall but stand on a high terrace of solid masonry as though to symbolize their elevation above their temporal surroundings. The constituent parts of the Khajuraho temples are woven into an organic conception, not always found in the other temples of India. The Khajuraho monuments are not as large and imposing as the Orissan temples, but they achieve their architectural effect by their graceful proportions and superb surface decoration. As a rule there are three main compartments, the *garbha-griha* (sanctum sanctorum) the *mandapa* (assembly hall) and the *ardha-mandapa* (entrance portico), all arranged in the manner of a cross. The *antarala*, the *maha-mandapa* or the transepts and the perambulatory passage supplement the other compartments in the more developed examples.

The aspiring quality usually associated with the architecture of a temple is emphasized in the Khajuraho group to a marked degree. Most of these temples are constructed of granite or sandstone, and the entire mass has an upward movement, the effect of loftiness being enhanced by a number of smaller replica turrets grouped round the main tower. The exterior of the temples, decorated with parallel friezes in high relief, pulsates with warmth and vigour and displays a rich wealth of plastic art.

In sharp contrast to the austerely simple interiors of the Orissan temples, the walls at Khajuraho are richly adorned with sculptures. In addition to the oversailing courses of masonry, the highly sculptured ceiling is supported by four pillars, one at each corner of the hall, bearing heavily sculptured bracket capitals. The pillars are carved above and below with grotesque half human figures of dwarfs and griffins. In the spaces in between are statuettes of graceful feminine forms. A notable characteristic common to Orissan temples and those of Khajuraho in particular is their profusion of erotic sculptures.

Significance of Erotic Sculptures

Erotic sculptures are not peculiar only to the Khajuraho temples. We find them in Buddhist Chaityas, Jain *basadis* and Hindu temples. We find them also in Ajanta and Ellora which were carved long before the Khajuraho builders were born. They can be seen in Dravidian and Chalukyan temples in Southern India and on the huge temple cars constructed of timber. What is peculiar to Khajuraho is not therefore the existence of these love themes but the boldness with which they are portrayed.

During the tenth century, what is called the Yogini cult commanded a wide following among the elite of society which included the Chandella kings who patronized the construction of these temples. The ceremonial rites of this cult, later condemned by Brahmin philosophers, often included sexual intercourse. The followers of this cult considered sex union as a physical symbol of mystic union with the god Siva.

The philosophy of this cult may be summarized somewhat like this ; the eternal truth about life is that it perpetuates itself and seeks in this act of perpetuation the fulfilment of its mission. It is not life that is transient, but its decay. Life's effort is to fight decay and death and this challenge is symbolized in the mystic union of Siva and

Sakti. The nearest physical equivalent of this spiritual union is sex union, the most triumphant moment of life and health. Wealth, longevity and spiritual bliss, they believed, came naturally to those who performed the rituals with faith after proper initiation.

That is probably how we find the more than usual emphasis on the erotic theme in the temples of Khajuraho. You see here lovely damsels in a variety of seductive poses. There is the girl with the flute, filling the reed with soft melodies; the *virahini* or forlorn beauty, pining away for her lover; the danseuse in the act of tying a bell to her ankle; the lady admiring her looks in a mirror; the girl squeezing water out of her hair after a bath or applying collerium to her eyes; the young beauty throwing a hurried, wistful glance while feigning to remove a thorn. Then the esoteric art of the Khajuraho craftsmen rises to a crescendo and we find young *apsaras* (nymphs) in amorous embraces. The hot kiss follows and the crowning moment comes with titillation and coitus. The artist has depicted this culmination of love in all sorts of fantastic poses not excluding perversions.

This strange cult did not long remain popular. It fell into disrepute during the eleventh century and gradually disappeared.

The twelve Vaishnava and Saiva temples to the north-west of the site form the most important of the groups at Khajuraho. Among these is the Siva shrine of Kandariya Mahadev, the largest and most representative of all the Khajuraho temples. A superb gallery of sculptures embellishes its walls.

Built on the same principle as the Kandariya Mahadev but much smaller in size are the Siva temples of Visvanath and the Vishnu temple of Chaturbhuj. The former is believed to have been built about 1000. Facing the Visvanath Temple and built on the same platform is a small shrine which houses a colossal figure of Nandi, Siva's bull-mount. The temple of Devi Jagadamba, now dedicated to the goddess Kali, was originally a Vishnu shrine. The temple dedicated to Surya, the Sun-god, is known for its elegant proportions. Another notable temple is dedicated to Varaha, the boar incarnation of Vishnu, represented by a big monolithic statue of the animal, installed in the centre. The Matangeswara and Parvati temples are also fine examples of the Khajuraho group.

Jain Temples

Basically similar to these Brahmanical temples are the six Jain temples grouped together to the south-east of Khajuraho. They are remarkable in that there is an almost complete absence of window openings which characterize the group of temples to the north-west of the town. Parallel friezes of statuary relieve the monotony of the walls to some extent. At intervals, portions project like buttresses from sculptured friezes and are carved into pillared niches where the sacred images are enshrined.

The Parsvanath is the largest and best carved Jain temple at Khajuraho. The sanctum contains an ornamental throne and a sculptured bull, the emblem of Adinath, the first of the Jain Tirthankaras.

A cluster of 12 pillars, standing a little apart from the main group, is all that remains of another Jain temple known as Ghantai, but these have attracted considerable attention on account of their Attic beauty.

Along with Jain temples this south-eastern group also includes Brahmanical ones such as the Duladev and the Chaturbhuj. The Kunwar Math, lying south of the Jain group near Kurar Nala, is perhaps the finest example of this class.

Udaipur

Udaipur, (different from Udaipur in Rajasthan) about 40 miles from Bhilsa in Madhya Pradesh, is yet another ancient site. The famous temple which stands here was built about 1059. It has a covered porch, a pyramidal roof and a tower elegantly ornamented with four flat bands, and the whole tower surmounted by an *amalasila* or vase-shaped stone. The temple is profusely carved and is regarded as a fine example of the Indo-Aryan style of architecture. Since it was constructed about the 11th century A. D., it seems probable that the Udaipur temple caught some of its fire from Khajuraho.

Gwalior

Within the Fort at Gwalior is a group of temples whose architectural style is somewhat different. Of the eleven religious structures within its walls, five are temples belonging to the eleventh century.

The Teli-ka-Mandir or the Oilman's Temple is probably the earliest of the temples in the Gwalior Fort. Although imposing in appearance, this temple consists only of the sanctuary with a porch and doorway leading into the inner chamber. Like that of the Vaitul Deul at Bhubaneswar, the shape of its roof bears testimony to its Buddhist heritage. Instead of a spire it has a ridge of the type found on the vaulted roof of a Buddhist Chaitya-hall.

On the road to the Fort lies a small temple dedicated to Chaturbhuj, or the 'the four-armed'—a name given to Vishnu. It was built in 875 and is believed to be the oldest temple in Gwalior. It has a small dome over its pyramidal roof which resembles that of the Teli-ka-Mandir in many respects.

Western India

Rajasthan

A great architectural movement swept Rajasthan and the adjacent region from the 8th to the 11th century. This movement was really a later flowering of the virile development inspired by the Guptas during the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries. Most of the temples built during this period were, however, destroyed during the earlier Muslim invasions.

As many as 26 temples were demolished to provide material for the Qutb Mosque at Delhi. Judging from the thousand temple pillars used in the Arhai-din-ka-Jhonpra, another monument of the Afghan invaders at Ajmer, at least 50 temples must have been despoiled to build it. However, the exquisitely carved pillars in these mosques convey some idea of the beauty of Hindu workmanship in the 8th and 9th centuries.

The village of Osia, 36 miles from Jodhpur, is the site of some sixteen badly damaged and crumbling Brahmanical and Jain temples. The earlier of these, built in the 8th and 9th centuries, form a separate group, remarkable for the fact that no two temples in it are alike.

Of these, the one dedicated to Surya, the Sun-god, is notable for its proportions. The temple dedicated to Mahavira is an example of a typical Jain shrine. It consists of a richly decorated *torana* (entrance arch) leading to an open porch, a closed hall, and the sanctum, all intact and built at different periods. The stylized and stiff treatment of the pillar in the temple of Pipla Devi, built in the 10th century, illustrates the decline of this school of architecture.

Contemporaneous with the post-Gupta style are the examples of rock-cut temples of the Indo-Aryan type in Rajasthan. At Damnar, about fifty miles from Jhalra Patan, there is a rock-cut temple which has a somewhat complex composition of eight shrines. The Kotheswara Temple at Pathari and the Udayeswara Temple at Udaipur belong to the same date.

The temple of Kalika Mata in Chittor and the Siva temple at Baroli are notable examples of 10th century architecture in Rajasthan. The temple of Ekalinga Mahadev, 12 miles from Udaipur, is a structure of unusual design and was built by Bapa Rawal in the 8th century. The neighbouring village of Nagda, an ancient site, has a large number of beautifully sculptured temples. Kumbha, Rana (Chief) of Mewar and husband of the celebrated 16th century woman-saint, Mirabai, built a number of temples at Chittor in the 15th century. Of these, a Siva temple and two temples dedicated to Krishna are worthy of note.

In the 11th century, rich merchants of Rajasthan spent fabulous sums to commemorate their religious faith. Vimala Shah, the Minister of Bhimadeva, the first Solanki ruler of Gujarat, built the first Jain temple at Dilwara (1031-32).

Constructed entirely of white marble quarried from Makrana, the Vimala Vasahi Temple is one of the oldest finished examples of Jain architecture. The temple, which is 98 feet long and 42 feet wide, is surrounded by a lofty wall containing 52 cells, each of which contains the image of a Tirthankar or Jain saint. These cells are screened by a double arcade of carved pillars. A pavilion facing the entrance-porch contains a procession of marble elephants, each bearing a statue of Vimala Shah and his family. Unfortunately, most of these figures have now disintegrated. The Vimala Vasahi Temple consists of an open portico and a vestibule, both formed by a simple grouping of pillars. The octagonal dome of the shrine is formed by eleven concentric rings containing carved designs of endless variety and is upheld by eight carved columns. A series of sixteen brackets, bearing an image of Sarasvati, the Goddess of learning, supports the rings of the dome. The intricately carved reliefs illustrate incidents from Jain literature and legend. A notable feature of the decoration is the exuberance of detail and the effective repetition of the same motif. The temple is not so much an architectural achievement as an example of tireless inventiveness and caprice in sculptured decoration.

Vastupala and his brother Tejpala, who belonged to the Jain community and became the Ministers of Vivadhavala, built another temple at Mount Abu during their terms of office. Built nearly two hundred years after the temple of Vimala Shah, the Tejpala Temple at Mount Abu follows more or less the same architecture and is among the last monuments built in the Solanki style. In the matter of detail, however, the Tejpala Temple is a natural evolution from the Vimala Vasahi, and what it loses in creative vigour it amply compensates in refinement and mechanical perfection.

A striking feature of the Tejpala Temple is the pendant of the dome which, in the words of Fergusson, "hangs from the centre more like a lustre of crystal drops than a solid mass of marble." The principal cell contains a colossal image of Neminatha with his conch-shell symbol on the seat. The florid reliefs and carvings on the porticoes of the 39 cells represent legendary episodes from the life of the presiding deity. The series of Jain and Brahmanical structures at Ashalgarh near Mount Abu and the Jain temples at Kumbharia in the neighbourhood belong to the same architectural complex.

From the ritualistic point of view, however, the most complete example of a Jain temple is the Chaumukh (or quadruple) Temple at Ranapur in Jodhpur district. This is a rare instance where the architect's name is announced. An inscription on a pillar states that Depaka, the man who built this temple, did so at the behest of "a devout worshipper of the Arhats", named Dharanki, in 1439. The presiding deity of this temple is Rishabhadeva or Adinath, installed in the inner shrine which is open on all the four sides. Close to the angles of the rectangular courtyard are four subsidiary shrines and eighty domes, supported by 400 columns. Surveyed from across the ascent, the temple has the appearance of a forest of pillars where the play of light and shade presents a fascinating spectacle.

Gujarat

The temples built in western India between Mahmud Ghazni's iconoclastic expedition to Somnath in Kathiawar in 1025-26 and the conquest of this part of the country by the Sultans of Delhi in 1298 represent one of the richest and most prolific developments of the Indo-Aryan style of architecture. Ghazni's campaign of desecration, instead of dampening the religious fervour of the Hindus, seems to have given an added impetus to temple-building in the peaceful period that followed his invasions. The great prosperity of the Solanki rulers was due largely to the geographical position of Gujarat which was then the centre of commerce. This was another factor which influenced the religious architecture of this region, for there is about it a lavishness which speaks of wealth both material and emotional.

At the end of the 13th century, however, a great many of these temples were despoiled by the Muslim conquerors : of those that survived this catastrophe several were reduced to crumbling ruins in the earthquake that devastated parts of Kathiawar at the beginning of the 19th century.

The elevation of a typical Solanki temple consists of three horizontal sections, the *pitha* or basement, the *mandovara* or wall-face up to the cornice, and the *sikhara* or spire. The *pitha* is carved with conventional motifs arranged in a specified order. The *garaspati* or horned demons occupy the lowest band; above them are the *gajapatis* or elephant fronts, followed by *asvathara* or horses, and *parathara* or human figures. The *mandovara* is reserved exclusively for figure sculpture. The *sikhara* is distinctive, for it consists of a group of turrets or *urusringas* surrounding a larger central structure.

The interiors of these temples are markedly peristylar, and richly carved pillars are arranged so as to form halls and aisles. The inner walls of the halls, unlike those in the Orissan temples, are profusely carved.

The finely proportioned 11th century Sun Temple at Modhera, now sadly in ruins, is another well-known example of Gujarat architecture. Its plan resolves itself into a *sutta-mandapa* or pillared hall, connected by a narrow passage to the *gudha-mandapa* (assembly hall) and the *garbha-griha* (sanctum), both forming an enclosed rectangular building.

Palitana, (about 35 miles from Bhavanagar in Kathiawar) perches on a 1,077-foot elevation known as Shatrunjaya hill. Shrines continued to be built on this site for centuries by the munificent Jains who saw in temple-building a means to spiritual salvation. The site which consists of two summits and a valley about 360 yards wide in between, bristles with white pinnacled temples. These temples are grouped in separate enclosures called *tuks* which are closed to visitors at sunset. In all, the hill has eleven *tuks*, more than five hundred temples, big and small, and about seven thousand separate images.

The iconoclastic zeal of Muslims which swept the country during the 14th and 15th centuries did much damage to the Palitana temples, some of which had been built in the 11th century. A great many of the present structures are therefore modern, having been built in the course of the last century. The more remarkable among these are the temples of *Adinath*, Chaumukh, Vimala Shah, Kumar Pal and Sampriti Raja.

The 10th century temple of Adinath, situated on the southern ridge, was restored in its present form in 1530. It is an imposing two-storeyed edifice with a lofty spire and a number of smaller shrines clustering round the base.

The temple of Chau-mukh or "the four-faced" is the largest on the northern ridge. It was erected in 1618 by a rich banker of Ahmedabad. Unlike the typical Hindu shrine which has only one entrance door, this structure has entrances on all the four sides to the *antarala*, and hence its name. There are 10 recesses enshrining the images of Tirthankaras. The pillars supporting the verandah are richly carved with flowered pattern, while the bracket capitals support musicians and dancing figures. The *sinhasan*, or the pedestal on which the great quadruple image of Adinath rests, is made of pure white marble.

The third temple, small but unique in its arrangement, is found in the enclosure called Nandivaradwipa. Built in 1840, this structure is a square of about 32 ft. with verandahs on all sides. The interior is divided by piers into smaller squares and the arches between them support the domes of the roof. The five inner squares form a cross crowned by towers and have recesses for images.

After Palitana, the Girnar hill (altitude 3,500 ft. above sea-level) in the south of Kathiawar, is next in importance to the Jains. At the foot of the hill are a number of rock-edicts issued by the emperor Ashoka, dating back to 250 B.C. Girnar has about fifteen groups of temples. The largest and oldest among these belongs to the 12th century and is dedicated to Neminath. Subsequent restorations have changed its face so much that it is difficult to visualize its original appearance. Close to the entrance there is an old triple temple dedicated to Mallinath, the 19th Tirthankara, and built by the two famous Ministers named Tejpala and Vastupala in 1230.

Kashmir

Kashmir, though historically and culturally a part of the Indian sub-continent, shows an architectural distinctiveness arising no doubt from its special geographical position. Although Kashmir has remained a mountain retreat cultural winds from Iran and other parts of Central Asia did manage to blow into the valley and affect its building style.

In the pre-Islamic period (before 1300), Kashmir witnessed two important epochs of culture—the early Buddhist (from about 200 to 700) and the classical Hindu (700 to 1300). The early period saw the construction of stupas and Buddhist monasteries. Most of these earlier structures and monastic settlements are available to us only as shapeless ruins revealed by the spade of the archaeologist.

The great era of temple building really began in the reign of Lalitaditya, an eighth-century monarch who built monumental temples in the Valley. They were constructed of enormous blocks of stone, chiselled with precision and finely dressed and bonded. This movement continued for about two hundred years and thenceforward started on a speedy decline.

Of the several building styles of India, that of Kashmir appears to be the nearest to the Graeco-Roman schools. The temples of Kashmir derive their classical character from the Graeco-Buddhist movement of ancient Gandhara (corresponding to the major part of northern Afghanistan). The pillars of Kashmir's medieval temples bear a close resemblance to the Doric order of the Romans. As in the Roman structures, lime mortar and dowels were used for bonding, an idea that might well have been borrowed from the Ptolemic Egyptians (3rd century B.C.) or the Achaemenid Persians (5th-3rd century B.C.). An early use of this technique has been noticed in the Buddhist remains of Parihasapura (14 miles from Srinagar).

Shrine at Parihasapura

During the reign of the great Lalitaditya, who ascended the throne in 724, stone masonry temple sprang up in large numbers all over Kashmir. His triumphant reign created a cultural climate in which grandeur became a dominant motive. The monumental Buddhist shrine at Parihasapura, now a shapeless mass of sculptured stones, and the temple of the Sun at Martand display this quality both in respect of their size and in the bold confidence with which their construction was undertaken.

Sun Temple at Martand

The Martand temple represents an architectural expressiveness of the highest order, and is the supreme model of a style to which a great number of later temples subscribed. It also signifies a departure from the Buddhist influence and the acceptance of the Brahmanical creed by the people because, instead of the Buddhist assembly hall where congregational worship was held, the central structure here is a sanctuary for the divine symbol. The shrine stands within an immense courtyard surrounded by a pillared arcade and a series of cells. Certain features in the surface decoration of the Martand temple are of unique interest. The regularly spaced medallions, the frequent use of pilasters and the pediment motif—all recall the architecture of the antique classical West. The capitals of the fluted pillars supporting cornices have a Doric quality about them, and their moulded bases are of the Attic type. The encircling colonnade is also reminiscent of the Greek style. However, these influences were not deep-rooted and the main composition is the product of the genius of Kashmir.

The mural sculpture on the walls displays unmistakably the influence of the art movement fostered by the Pala rulers of Bengal. This latter movement was apparently of such intensity that it made itself felt in regions far beyond its geographical boundaries.

Avantivarman, who ascended the throne of Kashmir in the latter half of the 9th century, ushered in another memorable era of architecture. He built a group of temples at Avantipur, a township 18 miles from Srinagar, of which that of Avantiswami, dedicated to Vishnu, still survives in part. It has been said that whereas the Martand temple is the expression of a "sudden glory", the Avantiswami temple shows greater maturity of experience and has therefore more sophistication and elegance. Graceful colonnades of pillars form an arcaded portico round the shrine and a monolithic pillar before the entrance bears a metal figure of Garuda, the eagle emblem of Vishnu.

Motifs borrowed from many sources, both foreign and indigenous, appear in the decorative carving, but these have been tastefully integrated into an ordered system with a recognizable unity. Designs reminiscent of the Buddhist stone-carvers of the Ashokan age and of the craftsmen of the Pala school are frequent and symbols traceable to Byzantium, ancient Persia and Syria are also found.

The conspicuously angular aspect of this temple is derived from the sloping roofs of the wooden houses of the valley.

Siva Temples at Pattan

The Siva temples built at Pattan in the 10th century during the reign of Sankaravarman reveal that though the traditional mode established at Martand was still being followed two centuries later, the masonry tended to become more monolithic. The precision and skill with which the mouldings are chiselled out of huge blocks of stone are amazing.

Pandrethan Temple

The small, well-preserved 12th century temple at Pandrethan near Srinagar gives a clear idea of the general plan of contemporaneous temples in Kashmir. The pyramidal structure of the roof, which is still intact in this case, is a prominent characteristic of this style. The ceiling consists of beams laid on the angles, a technique obviously derived from wooden constructions. Whereas a separate tank is provided for ablutions in most temples in Kashmir, here the shrine itself stands in a tank of water.

Shrine of Sankaracharya

Poised on the summit of a hill in Srinagar and overlooking the great loop of the Jhelum and the waters of the Dal Lake a thousand feet below, is the shrine of Sankaracharya, a great philosopher-saint of the 9th century. This building is probably contemporaneous with Sankara, if not later, and appears to be of unusual design, for here the temple plan is reduced to its most elementary form. The exterior is austere and devoid of all decoration, while the interior is a simple circular sanctuary where the sacred symbol of Siva is kept.

Southern India

For the beginnings of temple architecture in Southern India we have to go to a group of stone-built shrines in Aihole (in the Bijapur District of Mysore State) which are about the earliest surviving. These temples, built some time between 450 and 600 by the first Chalukya kings, correspond to the period when the later Gupta rulers built their shrines in Northern India. The Aihole temples are important because they were the real architectural ancestors of what is commonly known as the Chalukyan style—a style which continued to grow right up to the middle of the 13th century. Though temples belonging to this school are largely confined to Mysore State the influence of the style is to be found as far north as Gujarat and Rajasthan.

In the south and south-eastern parts, consisting mainly of Madras State and parts of Andhra Pradesh a different style of temple-building evolved which is commonly known as the Dravida or Dravidian school. To this belong the well-known temples of Tanjore, Madurai, Srirangam, Chidambaram, Rameswaram, and other places. These temples, with their many concentric enclosures, imposing towers and ornate "halls of a thousand pillars", are the products of a long evolutionary process which spread itself over a thousand years. The earliest of the surviving examples of the Dravidian type, belonging to the 6th century, are in Mahabalipuram (also called Mamallapuram—36 miles south of Madras), an ancient port of the Pallava kingdom, and at Kanchi (50 miles from Madras). These temples are of two types—those hewn out of solid rock and those built of stone. We find in these rock-cut and stone-built structures not the crude efforts of craftsmen still struggling to comprehend the purpose and principles of architecture but the work of a fairly advanced school of builders who conformed to practices long established by tradition.

The imposing temples of the Dravidian group which have exercised a compelling influence for generations are products of a long, unbroken development. Five great ruling dynasties, namely the Pallavas (600-900), the Cholas (900-1150), the Pandyas (1152-1350), the Vijayanagar kings (1340-1565) and the Nayaks of Madurai (1600-1700), were intimately associated with this process of development.

The Pallava era of Southern India's history represents a transition from the ancient to the medieval. This period saw the beginnings of the Dravidian style.

Mahabalipuram

The group of monuments at Mahabalipuram consists of ten *mandapas* or excavated halls besides seven monolithic *rathas*, so called because they resemble the big temple cars in which the images of the deities are taken out in procession. These illustrate two different forms of architecture which evolved in this early period but which later integrated into a single style. These *mandapas*, which are no higher than 15 or 20 feet, are remarkable for the shape and design of their pillars and roll cornices and for the blending of figure-sculpture with architecture. The panels of sculpture enclosed within pilasters and mouldings on the interior walls of the Durga and Varaha *mandapas* represent the finest achievement of the Pallava style.

The architecture of the monolithic *rathas* is based on the older Buddhist monasteries (*viharas*). They are square or oblong in plan and pyramidal in elevation, but varying in size and some minor details. The largest and the most complete of them is what is called the Dharmaraja Ratha, which combines all the features of the Pallava style—the pillars in the portico with rampant lions, the pyramidal tower and the turreted roof. The Bhima, Ganesh and Sahadeva *rathas* are oblong in plan and are based on the architecture of the Buddhist Chaitya hall.

They are two or three storeys high, and are surmounted by a barrel roof with the Chaitya gable at the ends. In this multi-storeyed structure with its barrel roof we see the beginnings of the stupendous Dravidian *gopurams* which came into vogue six centuries later.

The excellent quality of figure sculpture in the Mahabalipuram group of temples set the tone for the development of plastic art in later years. This movement was soon to blossom into the great classical art of Java and Cambodia. In the proximity of the rock-cut temples is a huge whale-back rock on which the Pallava artists have chiselled in thick profusion some of the finest sculptures known to belong to ancient India. Monkeys, lions, elephants, deer, and a host of wild animals along with ascetics in meditation and mythical serpent gods have been carved with great vigour, realism and charm.

The second phase of Mahabalipuram architecture which followed the architecture of the rock-cut style of the last quarter of the seventh century favoured structural temples which provided a larger canvas for the display of the sculptor's skill. Of these structural temples the most outstanding examples are the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram and the temples of Kailasanatha and Vaikuntaperumal at Kanchipuram. They all belong to the period 700-800. The solidity of the masonry of the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram is vouched for by the fact that for over twelve centuries it has withstood the pitiless onslaught of the monsoons, the battering of sea waves and the treachery of drifting sands. A massive wall originally enclosed the temple. Two additional shrines are attached to the cella, one of which has a smaller *vimana* or tower which, along with the bigger one on the cella, creates a most pleasing effect. The structure of the tapering *vimana*, which is light, elegant and well-proportioned, set the model for the later temples.

Kanchipuram

Kanchipuram or Kanchi, the most ancient of all cities of the South, was renowned for its universities and temples. There is still a profusion of ancient temples in this town which was, like Mahabalipuram, the cradle of the Dravidian style. One of its two early temples, the Kailasanatha Temple (commenced about 700) is a well-planned organic structure which incorporates all the major characteristics native to the Pallava style—the pyramidal tower, a pillared hall and the vestibule, all enclosed by a wall surmounted by a parapet of cupolas. We find here the rampant lion pilaster, so characteristic of the Mahabalipuram group, being constantly repeated on the walls with great effect. Its sanctum tower is more evolved—substantial, massive, well proportioned and elegant in its outlines. The early beginnings of the Dravidian *gopuram* are also noticed here though we find them dwarfish and not yet a conspicuous element of the architecture.

The other temple at Kanchipuram (about 780) dedicated to Vaikuntaperumal (a form of Vishnu) is a more mature example of the Pallava style, complete with cloisters, portico and the sanctuary, all of them grouped in an organic composition. Its *vimana*, more evolved than that of Kailasanatha, is square in plan and rises to a height of 60 ft. from the ground.

Chola Temples

When the Pallava rule declined in the ninth century, a new dynasty of rulers called the Cholas came to dominate the South Indian scene for over two hundred years. As builders the Cholas improved on the excellent tradition of the Pallavas and constructed temples on a grand scale. India owes to them two magnificent structures, one at Tanjore and the other at Gangaikondacholapuram.

Brihadeesvara Temple, Tanjore

The Brihadeesvara Temple at Tanjore, (built around 1000) is among the most magnificent temples of the south. Its sanctum tower soars to a height of 190 ft. and recalls the might and splendour of its royal builder, Rajaraja.

This temple consists of the *vimana* (the towered sanctuary), the *ardha-mandapa* (compartment in front of the sanctuary), the *maha-mandapa* (large enclosed hall in front of the main shrine), and a large pavilion in front dedicated to the deity's bull-mount. The gateway on the east is surmounted by a *gopuram* or tower. A pillared corridor runs along the inner side of the enclosing wall connecting a number of minor shrines built at the cardinal points and at intervals. There is a second and outer enclosure to the temple with a gateway in front of the inner one which is also surmounted by a tower.

The most striking feature of this temple is its towered sanctuary which rises perpendicularly from a 50-ft. high square base and thence tapers off to a total height of 190 ft. The vertical disposition of this tower is broken by thirteen diminishing tiers with pronounced horizontal lines. On the topmost tier is poised a beautifully shaped monolithic cupola (supposed to weigh 80 tons) which is ornamented on the four sides with winged niches.

The vertical base of the *vimana* is divided horizontally into two sections by massive cornices and the two compartments are decorated with figure sculptures of excellent workmanship.

Gangaikondacholapuram Temple

The other Chola temple at Gangaikondacholapuram, (38 miles north-east of Tanjore and 17 miles from Kumbakonam) is in much the same style, except for a greater elaboration of architectural details. An important feature of this structure is its assembly hall (*maha-mandapa*), a low structure 175 ft. by 95 ft., containing over 150 pillars of relatively ordinary design. In this many-columned hall we see the beginnings of the "thousand-pillared halls" for which the great Dravidian temples of later periods are celebrated.

The Cholas built magnificent temples; but their achievements in figure-sculpture and metal casting were equally great. The Chola builder used statuary to great effect in the temples. Some of the finest bronzes of this period can be seen in the Art Gallery at Tanjore.

Pandyan Temples

The Cholas were succeeded by the Pandyas who ruled the Tamil country for nearly two centuries (1150-1350). Under the Pandyas the gateway of the temple which had so far received only the casual attention of the architect became a subject of special treatment. They built very few new temples, but did much to improve the architectural surroundings of the existing ones which were ancient and venerated. While preserving the unpretentious appearance of shrines they sought to boost their importance by adding fortress-like enclosure walls and massive towered gateways. These towers were multi-storeyed pyramids built of brick and mortar.

The typical *gopuram* of a temple of South India rises from a huge rectangular mass of stone masonry pierced with a gateway in the centre. The tower goes up, tier upon tier, in a diminishing upward sweep, often to a total height of 150 feet. On the flat summit of the tapering structure rests an elongated, barrel-vaulted roof with gable ends that remind us of the keel roof of early Buddhist Chaitya halls. The entire surface of the *gopuram* is converted into a pulsating mass of gods and goddesses, angels and demons who inhabit the world of Hindu mythology.

Vijayanagar Style

A significant factor which came to influence the Dravidian style in the 14th century was the elaboration of rituals observed in temple worship. Besides the shrine of the main deity which occupied the middle of the enclosure, separate shrines for other deities belonging to the theistic scheme were also put up. Chief among them was the shrine for the goddess, the consort of the main deity. Pavilions and pillared halls were added to provide for special rituals of which the most colourful was the symbolic celebration of the wedding of the deity with his consort. The structure dedicated to this ritual was the *kalyana-mandapa*—an open pillared pavilion executed in a highly ornate style. Raised on a low platform, it had a "throne seat" in the centre on which the processional deities were placed for worship.

The florid character of the Vijayanagar temples was achieved largely by converting the pillars and piers into highly complicated statuary with human figures, rearing animals and divine and semi-divine beings dexterously chiselled in solid blocks of stone. Whatever the moulding of the pillar, each was provided with ornamental brackets which formed part of the capital. These brackets had below them elaborately carved flower pendants resembling an inverted lotus bud.

Temples belonging to the Vijayanagar style are to be found all over Southern India, but the best among them are to be found in the deserted capital of Vijayanagar itself, now popularly known as Hampi. Hardly five miles from Hospet (the present site of the Tungabhadra dam) Hampi presents the forlorn look of a city in ruins. The surviving structures which are mostly temples and a few secular buildings are the only mangled remnants of what was, according to contemporary chroniclers, "the finest and the most populous of the cities" in sixteenth century India.

Hampi, like Mahabalipuram, retains its unique importance for the tourist and the historian. The finest monuments of this ruined city are the Vittala and Hazara Rama Temples built in the sixteenth century.

The Vittala Temple, dedicated to a form of Vishnu, is the more ornate of the two. Its construction, begun by the Vijayanagar ruler Krishna Deva Raya in 1513, was obviously never completed. The temple stands in a courtyard 500 ft. by 310 ft., has three entrances, east, south and north, and a tower on each gateway. The central structure dedicated to Vittala is 25 ft. high.

The temple has three components: the *garbha-griha* (sanctuary), the *mandapa* (closed assembly hall) in the middle, and the *ardha-mandapa* (open pillared portion) in front. The visitor is first attracted to the portico by its finely shaped double-flexured eave. It is a columned pavilion of considerable dimensions built on a plinth five feet high. Its 56 pillars, each 12 ft. high, are hewn out of solid blocks of granite.

The basic designs of these piers are the same in conception, and are executed with great skill. Each pier takes the form of a cluster of delicately carved pillars, or figures of divinities in their various animated forms, or rearing animals half-natural and half-mythical. Over these piers are bracket-supports of immense size combined with heavily carved entablatures. On these rests the ceiling, ornamented with an enormous lotus flower flattened and sunk into its surface.

Another structure of superb workmanship within the enclosure but detached from the main temple is the *kalyana-mandapa* or marriage pavilion. It consists of an open pavilion resembling the porch in front of the temple but much smaller in size. It has forty-eight richly carved pillars.

In the courtyard of the Vittala Temple there is another unique architectural piece, shaped like the processional temple car, complete with wheels, but cut entirely from a single rock. This exquisitely carved lithic model of a temple chariot is an interesting architectural show-piece which, both by its size and location, adds beauty to the temple complex.

The Hazara Rama Temple, built about 1520 by Krishna Deva Raya, is a structure of modest dimensions. It appears to have been built mainly for the use of the imperial household.

The main and subsidiary structures of this temple closely conform to the style of the Vittala Temple. Special mention must however be made of the unusual size and design of the four central pillars in its *mandapa* or assembly hall. The *vimana* or tower over the main building which occupies the centre of the courtyard is built partly of stone and partly of brick.

Other famous temples of this style, more or less contemporaneous with the examples at Hampi, are the ones at Vellore, Kumbakonam, Kamelipuram, Tadpatri, Virinjipuram and Srirangam in Madras State. The *kalyana-mandapa* of the Vellore temple is remarkable for the ingenuity and richness of its carvings. The famous "horse-court" of the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam belonging to the late Vijayanagar period represents the culmination of this extravagant style in the sixteenth century. We have here the perfect specimen of the rearing horse motif.

Madurai Phase

Madurai was the capital of the Nayak dynasty which ruled the Tamil country right up to Cape Comorin after the Vijayanagar Kingdom splintered in 1565. The form which the Dravidian style of temple-building assumed under these rulers—one which flourishes to this day—is, in principle, a continuation of the building methods of the Pandyas (1150-1300). The Pandyas lavished most of their skill and resources on the architecture of the *gopuram* and on extending and improving the shrines already in existence. Under the Nayaks of Madurai the temple developed into a vast complex of structures with imposing gateways and towers.

This complex of structures grew round the main shrine which was the nucleus, and developed occasionally into the dimensions of a minor township with residential houses and bazars in the outer enclosures. Naturally, therefore, the unity of design and architectural effect were sacrificed to size and a craze for expansiveness.

There are many temples which belong to the Madurai group either wholly or in part. The most outstanding of these are the temples at Madurai, Srirangam, Tiruvarur, Rameswaram, Chidambaram, Tirunelveli, Tiruvannamalai and Srivilliputhur, all in Madras State.

Meenakshi Temple, Madurai

The Meenakshi Temple of Madurai is a typical example. Conceived and built all at one time, it is actually a double temple, dedicated to Sundaresvar (Siva) and his consort Meenakshi. The outer walls enclosing the shrines and other structures measure 850 ft. by 725 ft. and each of the four sides has a large gateway. As we enter the eastern gateway we are led through a pillared corridor into another gateway surmounted by a *gopuram*. This gateway has its counterparts on the other three sides, and each has a *gopuram* smaller than the ones on the exterior walls. This inner enclosure is mostly covered by a flat roof. Within this second enclosure is a covered court which has an entrance to the east. In the third and the innermost enclosure which has only one entrance on the east, is situated the shrine which consists of the familiar three compartments, the cella, vestibule and the assembly hall. The sanctum has a small tower rising above the flat roof of the other two compartments. All the courts and halls situated within the three enclosures have colonnades of pillars of bizarre designs. The most exquisitely wrought pillars belong to the covered court (Swami Singotanam) outside the entrance to the innermost enclosure. The figure-sculptures attached to some of the shafts are larger than life-size and of excellent workmanship.

An interesting secular building which is an addition to the temple complex is the Pudu Mandapam or Tirumalai Choultry in front of the main gateway. Its speciality are the four rows of elaborately carved pillars. Ten life-size statues of the kings of the Nayak dynasty, who were all devotes of the Goddess, are attached to the central pillars.

To the south of the main sanctuary is the shrine dedicated to Meenakshi, the consort of the deity. In front of the Meenakshi Temple is the beautiful "pond of the Golden Lilies", whose waters reflect the great tower on the south entrance.

There are in all eleven *gopurams* to the Madurai temple, the largest and the best of them being the one on the southern doorway rising to a total height of about 200 feet. Its summit is a barrel roof with the usual Chaitya gable at the ends. The lofty base and the concave curves of the whole structure tend to give to it a soaring quality greater even than what its height suggests. The surface is a pulsating mass of masonry, covered all over with plastic figures of deities and semi-divine characters freely drawn from the inexhaustible treasure-house of Hindu mythology.

Temple at Srirangam

The largest Dravidian temple complex is the one at Srirangam, an island formed by the two branches of the river Kaveri (two miles north of Tiruchirapalli). The main shrine, which is architecturally insignificant, is enclosed by an enormous outer wall 2,475 ft. by 2,880 ft. Surrounding the main shrine are six concentric walls, and each wall has its quota of towered gateways. Within the precincts of the temple residential colonies and shopping centres have been laid out thus giving to the whole temple complex the appearance of a township.

Architecturally, the finest part of the temple is the "hall of the thousand pillars" situated within the fourth enclosure. Its pillars are carved of granite monoliths, a stupendous undertaking which impresses one not only by its size but the quality of their carvings. The Garuda *mandapam* in the third enclosure is a beautiful pillared hall and adjacent to it is the Surya Pushkarani, a covered pond named after the sun. At the northern end of this enclosure is the Chandra Pushkarani, meaning the 'moon-pond'. The second enclosure has a covered court with pillared pavilions.

Rameswaram Temple

Another well-known example of the late Dravidian style is the Rameswaram temple near Adam's Bridge which separates Ceylon from India. This temple, like the ones at Madurai or Tanjore, was built on a settled plan, but with somewhat different results. The Rameswaram temple consists of two shrines which are enclosed by three concentric walls. The outermost enclosure which measures 880 ft. in length and 673 ft. in width is a plain wall twenty feet high with four *gopurams* built in the best traditions of the 17th century.

By far the grandest part of the Rameswaram temple is the 4,000-ft. pillared corridor. The pillars, about 12 ft. high, are big blocks of granite, richly carved and well-proportioned. The perspective presented by these pillars running uninterruptedly to a length of nearly 700 ft. is a breath-taking sight.

No less remarkable for its architectural merit is the Nataraja Temple at Chidambaram (in South Arcot District). The temple also consists of a number of other structures. Although these were put up at different times they retain a surprising element of symmetry and functional unity in their disposition. The centre of the large enclosure is occupied by the sacred tank (Sivaganga) around which other structures are grouped in an orderly manner. The 'hall of the thousand pillars' (the Raja Sabha) for which the temple is famous was built in the 17th century. The finest part of this temple, however, is its porch with fifty-six pillars, eight feet high. They are all delicately carved.

Other temples of which there are a large number are more or less repetitions of the same style with minor variations. Tanks, pillared pavilions and towering *gopurams*, and concentric compound walls are their main characteristics.

Chalukyan Style

For the origin of the Chalukyan style we have to go back to a period even earlier than the Pallava group of temples at Mahabalipuram. The Dravidian and Chalukyan styles, prevalent in the eastern and western regions of Southern India, broadly speaking, had the same source of inspiration and served the same ideals. They were actually two streams of the same cultural current which manifested itself in the religion and aesthetics of the Hindus for over a millennium.

The earliest examples of the Chalukyan style are found at Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal, places which are usually overlooked by the ordinary tourist because of their location in an unfrequented interior of the Bijapur District in Mysore State. Aihole alone contains as many as 70 temples and of these, the Ladh Khan and the Durga temples belonging to about 450 A. D. are important examples of early experimentation.

The Ladh Khan* is a low, flat-roofed structure consisting of a pillared hall and a cella. It has a square plan, and is enclosed by walls on three sides. On the east side is a pillared porch and the interior of the temple consists of a pillared hall with perforated windows fixed in the walls. The Durga temple at Aihole is interesting, being a Brahmanical adaptation of the Buddhist Chaitya hall with an apsidal or rounded end. The entire structure is built on a high moulded plinth, and is surmounted by curvilinear *sikhara*, resembling more the Northern than the Dravidian style.

Another temple at Aihole known as the Hucchimalligudi temple is much smaller than the Durga shrine, but contains a new feature, namely, a vestibule or *antarala* which is an intermediate chamber between the cella and the main hall. In later years the vestibule came to form an essential part of the Chalukyan temple as it did of the Dravidian.

Badami Temples

Badami is a small town nestling at the foot of hills, and contains several temples of the early Chalukyan period, both of the structural and rock-cut varieties. Into the sides of the hills situated adjacent to the town are cut a group of four pillared halls, three of which are Brahmanical (about 578). Externally, these halls are quite unassuming and achieve little architectural effect. The interior, however, has wall panels of sculptures of excellent quality, and pillars which are mainly responsible for the architectural effect.

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*It owes this name to a Muslim Saint called Ladh Khan who had put up a hut close by and lived in it.

Temples at Pattadakal

Ten miles from Badami is Pattadakal where we find several seventh-century temples. Some are in the Northern or Indo-Aryan style and others in the Southern style. The Papanatha Temple (late 7th century) of the Northern style and the Sangamesvar (circa 725) and Virupaksha Temples (circa 740) of the Southern style are the best known among these.

The exquisitely proportioned Virupaksha Temple has much in common with Kanchi's Kailasanatha Temple, a Pallava masterpiece. While its architecture shows Pallava influence it leaves us in no doubt that the temple was the combined product of Chalukyan and Dravidian builders. Besides the central shrine the temple has a detached pavilion in front where Nandi, Siva's bull-mount, is installed. The entire temple-complex is enclosed by a wall. The sculptured ornamentation on the temple walls, the pilasters, brackets, cornices and perforated windows are all covered over with ornamental detail—a quality which received even greater emphasis in later Chalukyan art. The *sikhara* or tower over the cella is square in plan, and resembles the Kailasanatha Temple of Kanchipuram in style.

Later Developments

With the eclipse of Rashtrakutas in the ninth century Mysore region passed into the hands of a new Chalukya dynasty who set up their capital at Kalyani, 60 miles west of modern Bidar. For centuries thereafter South Indian architecture came to be influenced by the Cholas in the east and the Chalukyas in the west.

Towards the end of the tenth century there was a spurt of artistic activity in a limited region of the Mysore country under the patronage of an ancient ruling dynasty called the Gangas. Jains by faith, they made significant contributions to the literature and art of ancient Mysore.

The greatest bequest of the Gangas to Mysore's art is the group of monuments at Sravanabelgola (55 miles north-east of Mysore city). Of these, the Chamundaraya Basadi (Basadi means Jain temple) and the stupendous statue of Gomata (son of the first Tirthankara) are the best examples. The Basadi built about 1000 in the Dravidian style under Chola influence is situated on Chandragiri, one of the two hills adjoining the temple town.

Opposite this hill is Indra Betta or Indra's Hill, about 400 feet high. On the summit of this hill, surrounded by an arcade of cloisters, stands the stone colossus of Gomata, over 56 feet in height. This magnificent statue of the nude Jaina saint was carved from a solid block of gneiss which had crowned the hill. The statue is well proportioned, and the serene, benevolent smile of the Jain saint is still as fresh today as when the artist carved it.

Temples of the Hoysalas

Towards the eleventh century a new artistic impulse blossomed in the south-west region of Mysore which incorporated some elements of the cave temple tradition of western Deccan. The multi-pillared flat-roofed cave temples with their profusion of sculptured panels influenced the large number of temples built between 1050 and 1300 by the Hoysala kings who ruled initially as vassals of the imperial Chalukyas but later displaced their suzerains as the dominant political power. In these temples, built mostly in the 12th and 13th centuries, the emphasis shifted from architecture to sculpture. The elaborately ornate style of these temples was made possible by the discovery of soap-stone—a material of much finer grain than sandstone or granite. This material, found in abundance in the Mysore country, is close-textured and highly tractable under the chisel.

The basic scheme of the typical Hoysala temple is not very different from the other known types in Southern India. The Pallava *vimana* influenced the Chalukyan style, but it was subjected to radical modifications. The horizontal arrangement of tiers was retained but the total height was reduced by making each tier shorter. In the later temples these horizontal lines slowly lost their emphasis on account of the overbearing effect of sculptural details worked on all the tiers. The cubical interior of the cell was provided with a star-shaped exterior thus lengthening the total wall space and providing added scope for the sculptor. The pillars, ceilings, doorways and jambs, the capitals, the brackets, the walls and the tower all received the minute attention of the Hoysala builder whose zeal for carving overwhelmed his sense of architecture.

Chennakesava Temple, Belur

The finest of the early Hoysala temples are the Chennakesava Temple at Belur, and the Hoysalesvara Temple at Halebid, both begun in 1117.

The Kesava Temple, raised on a low (three-foot high) platform, is both flat and dwarfish. The *vimána* (or tower over the sanctum) is conspicuous by its absence. The pillared assembly hall has three entrances, each elaborately carved and flanked by a pagoda-like shrine in miniature and *dvarapalas* or celestial door-keepers. The workmanship on the jambs and lintels conforms to the high standard of excellence for which the sculptured panels of all Hoysala temples are so well known.

The liberally spaced but well executed sculptures on the exterior walls of the Belur temple are in happy contrast to the rich, horizontal bands of carvings that cover the railing of the central hall.

A unique feature of the Kesava Temple which the visitor will notice on first sight are the thirty-eight beautifully carved bracket-figures which are positioned slantwise on the exterior pillars of the main hall and below the heavy, overhanging eave. They are the 12th century Hoysala sculptors' version of ideal feminine beauty—healthy, vibrant and sensuous. These images, known popularly as *mandanikas*, provide the exterior of the temple with a decorative motif of great appeal even if their function is anything but architectural.

The interior of the main hall is a pillared pavilion covered all round by thick perforated screens. Some of the pillars, and invariably all the ceilings and the stone beams are so heavily carved that the resultant effect is one of congestion. The onlooker is dazed by the unrestrained exuberance of carvings which are in the best Hoysala tradition.

The four central pillars of the hall are adorned with bracket figures of great beauty and plastic finish. The theme is in each case a heavily bejewelled dancing damsel with sumptuous, rounded breasts and slim waist.

An interesting feature of some of the pillars in the hall is that they are lathe-turned. Enormous blocks of stone were first roughly chiselled to the required proportions and then turned on a lathe while sharp chisels cut grooves in the shaft to shape a series of discs or bell-shaped mouldings. By what mechanical device they were able to work a lathe with two or three tons of stone on it is not known. There is no doubt that the Hoysala builder used this now forgotten process freely to turn out pillars in great number.

The ceiling of the central hall of the Kesava Temple matches the rich variety of its exquisitely carved pillars and is a work of considerable artistic skill. It has an octagonal base over which a low dome is raised. The eight corner slabs and the ascending rings of stone are all, as usual, extravagantly carved. From the centre hangs a huge, tubular drop like a pendant and the flat face of the pendant is converted into an intricately carved panel depicting the mythological theme of lion-headed Narasimha slaying a demon.

Hoysalesvara Temple, Halebid

The Hoysalesvara Temple at Halebid, considered to be a masterpiece of the Hoysala craftsmen, is an incomplete 12th century structure. Like the Belur temple, it is flat and has no superstructure.

This is a twin-temple, where two structures of almost identical size are joined together by their adjacent transepts. Though each unit is a structure of only moderate size, taken together, and along with the Nandi pavilion in front, the temple presents itself as a vast and ambitious structure. The exterior of the temple is split into numerous projections in conformity with its star-shaped plan. As we proceed from the entrance along the walls of the temple, an endless scroll of exquisitely carved panels unrolls itself, presenting an astonishing display of plastic art. At the bottom of the indented walls are six horizontal bands of relief sculptures each devoted to a repeating theme—elephants, lions, legendary swans, and stories from the Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Above these bands and covering the central space of the gallery one encounters panel after panel of heavily carved figure sculptures, each about half life-size. For sheer wealth of sculptural embellishment and intricacy of chisel work there are few temples in India to compare with this monument.

Likewise, the four doorways of the temple, the lintels and the guardian angels (*dvarapalas*)—all subjected to heavy ornamentation—give the impression of being the work of a master goldsmith rather than a sculptor.

Kesava Temple, Somnathpur

A typical example of the fully evolved Hoysala style is the 13th century Kesava Temple at Somnathpur, 25 miles from Mysore city. It is a three-celled structure, the shrines being symmetrically placed around the main hall. The whole temple, raised on a low platform like all Hoysala temples, occupies the middle of a big rectangular enclosure. The north, west and south sides of the enclosure have a continuous range of sixty-four cells with a pillared verandah in front, all raised on a plinth about three feet high.

The temple, being a combination of three shrines, has a cross-shaped plan so homogeneous and complete that in its cloistered setting it gives the impression of being a perfectly planned structure. All the three shrines have their *vimanas* or towers intact, the tower being divided horizontally from the base by a heavy overhanging eave. The plan of the *vimana* conforms strictly to the star-shaped plan of the shrine, the vertical, tapering ribs being composed of miniature shrines, all elaborately carved. The indented exterior of the walls is subjected to the same treatment as that of the Hoysalesvara Temple, with running friezes of elephants, cavalry, and stories from the Hindu epics. Above them are panels from which heavily bejewelled gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon lean forward in bold relief.

The temple of Somnathpur is also remarkable for the ceilings of the pillared hall. Each is a dome composed of enormous slabs placed one upon another. The usual decorative pattern of the inside of domes is that of a pendant or a banana flower hanging from the centre. The pattern is formed by concentric circles diminishing as they rise, and connected by radiating ribs. The resulting effect is that of a highly ornate umbrella, carved into an enormous block of stone.

Besides these well-known examples, there are several other Hoysala temples of the 12th and 13th centuries in the northern districts of Mysore where the early Chalukyan style originated and flourished. These temples differ from the southern group in their plan, treatment of the exterior walls, the shape of the towers, pillars and the design of the doorways. The star-shaped plan is absent in the northern variety and they are mostly rectangular. The treatment of wall surfaces conforms more to the early style of the 7th century and is more elegant, the sculptured panels being spaced out by pilasters. The embellishment is therefore architectural rather than sculptural. The doorways, too, are different. Instead of the purely ornamental rectangular doorway of the southern temples we see in these northern temples an emphasis on the architectural element rather than on the purely decorative. Their ornamentation consists of pilasters on the two sides, and a moulded lintel and cornice above.

A new architectural feature developed in the later temples of the Dharwar district is the prominent, projecting eave, often double-curved in section or a straight projection intended to give the building greater protection from rain and sun, and at the same time enhance the dignity of the structure. The Muktesvara Temple at Chandadampur on the banks of the Tungabhadra is an early example of this. The temples of Ittagi, Lakkundi and Kuruvatti and several others in the Dharwar region represent the culmination of the Later Chalukyan or Hoysala type in north Mysore (about 1100 A.D.). The Mahadeva Temple at Ittagi (21 miles from Gadag), which is now partly in ruins, may be regarded as one of the most highly finished examples of this style. It consists of an open pavilion or *mandapa* and a closed hall with an antechamber and the cella, all grouped together to make a harmonious structure.

Another equally well-known group of temples in this style is to be found at Gadag. They are dedicated to Trikutesvara (a form of Siva), Sarasvati (Goddess of Learning), and Somesvara (another name for Siva) and belong more or less to the same period. The Trikutesvara is a triple-shrine temple and has two covered pavilions in line with the eastern and western shrines. Situated close to this is the temple of Sarasvati. It is now in a state of ruin, but one can still see the beautiful pillars of its *mandapa*.

Twelfth century examples in northern Mysore are numerous and widely distributed. But the most interesting of them all is the temple of Dodda Basappa at Dambal, 13 miles south-east of Gadag. The entire structure including the cells and the pillared hall has a stellate plan which is carried right up to the elevation of the building. The horizontal courses of the *vimana* are intersected by vertical lines that take off from the star-shaped plan of the cells. This vertical tendency of the building is made more vivid by the angular projections in the walls and the tower which give an appearance of added strength to the structure.

Andhra Pradesh

The Chalukyan style of architecture which blossomed in the Mysore region in the 11th and 12th centuries was more pervasive than the foregoing accounts might indicate. Its influence was felt as far north as Rajasthan and Gujarat and as far east as Warangal in Andhra Pradesh. Among the great ruins at a place called Hanamkonda, three miles from Warangal, is a thousand-pillared, triple-shrined temple built in 1162 by a ruler called Prataparudra Deva. The large pavilion with 300 pillars in front of the temple is a magnificent structure. While the pillars of the pavilion are plain, those of the temple are lavishly carved and the intricate domical ceilings and exquisite bracket figures are all executed in the typical Chalukyan style.

The Swambhava (Siva) Temple at Hanamkonda, though in a sad state of ruin, still preserves its remarkable *toranas* (ornamental gateways). The architectural quality of these is comparable only to the famous *toranas* of the Sanchi Stupa (near Bhopal in Northern India). Palampet in Adilabad District also has an exquisitely carved Chalukyan temple which has a close resemblance to the Hoysala temple of Mysore with its heavily carved architraves, door-frames and outer walls and its double-shelled walls fashioned from large blocks of stone.

Temples of Kerala and South Kanara

From the stately, elaborate temple complex of the Dravidian style and the ornate, exquisite temples of the Chalukyan we come to a different style of temples in Kerala—the fascinating little State that clings to the palm-fringed south-western coastal strip of India. The gabled or multiple-roofed structure of Kerala built of laterite stone bricks, wood and tiles present a very different appearance from their architectural counterparts elsewhere in Southern India. Travancore, formerly a princely State, was the meeting place of the Dravidian and indigenous styles. In its southern part the two traditions had much in common and flourished side by side influencing each other, while in the rest of Kerala the indigenous style prospered in greater isolation.

The typical Kerala temple or *srikoil* can be square, rectangular or circular in plan, the structure being raised on a socle (a plain or moulded stone pedestal). The main building lies on an east-west axis and is surrounded by a rectangular cloister. The roofs are by far the most conspicuous part of Kerala temples. The structure is circular in plan in the *srikoil* at Tirumandikkara (13th century), and rectangular in the one at Vaikom (15th century), and the roof conforms to the plan in each case. It is a broad-based, steep and pointing superstructure resembling the thatched or tiled roof of huts and houses commonly built in Kerala where the monsoon showers are rather heavy. As a rule the temple roofs are covered with tiles. Great attention is paid to the construction of these roofs, the length, thickness and the joints of the rafters being regulated by rules laid down in ancient treatises on architecture.

If the plan of the temple is circular, the roof becomes an enormous cone, its hanging base covering a good part of the perpendicular wall in a broad sweeping curve. The square temple has its steep pyramidal roof, being more austere in appearance, and less impressive than the cone.

The third variety is a ridged roof which can be single or double. The ridge of the roof runs breadthwise and projects beyond the hipped end, terminating in a characteristic triangular gable-end resembling an open attic. The roofs, whether conical, pyramidal or ridged are often multiple—two or three storeys high—and on that account not only add to the height and majesty of the structures but provide greater opportunity for the image-carver to display his skill on and around the struts that support the roofs and inside the ceilings. The *Ramayana* and other stories from Hindu mythology supplied themes for the elaborately carved panels on the exterior walls. Among the great temples of the Kerala style which the tourist can see without much difficulty are the Trivikramangalam Temple (seven miles from Trivandrum), the temple of Trichur, and the Tripariyar temple (about 30 miles from Trichur). Within a vast enclosing wall at Tripariyar are to be found three shrines, each one of which has a different type of superstructure, typical of the Kerala style.

The South Kanara District on the western coast of Mysore also has some remarkable temples with roofs of the Kerala style. The Jain temples at Mudabidri (20 miles north-east of Mangalore), the earliest of which goes back to the twelfth century, are built of stone but are clear copies of the wooden structures. The finest of this group, the Chandranatha Temple, consists of three, halls or *mandapas* which are all connected and combined with the cella which contains the image of a Jain deity. Built some time in the 15th century with pillars moulded in the Chalukyan style, the entire structure has a common multiple roof with open triangular gable ends similar to those in the temples of Kerala.

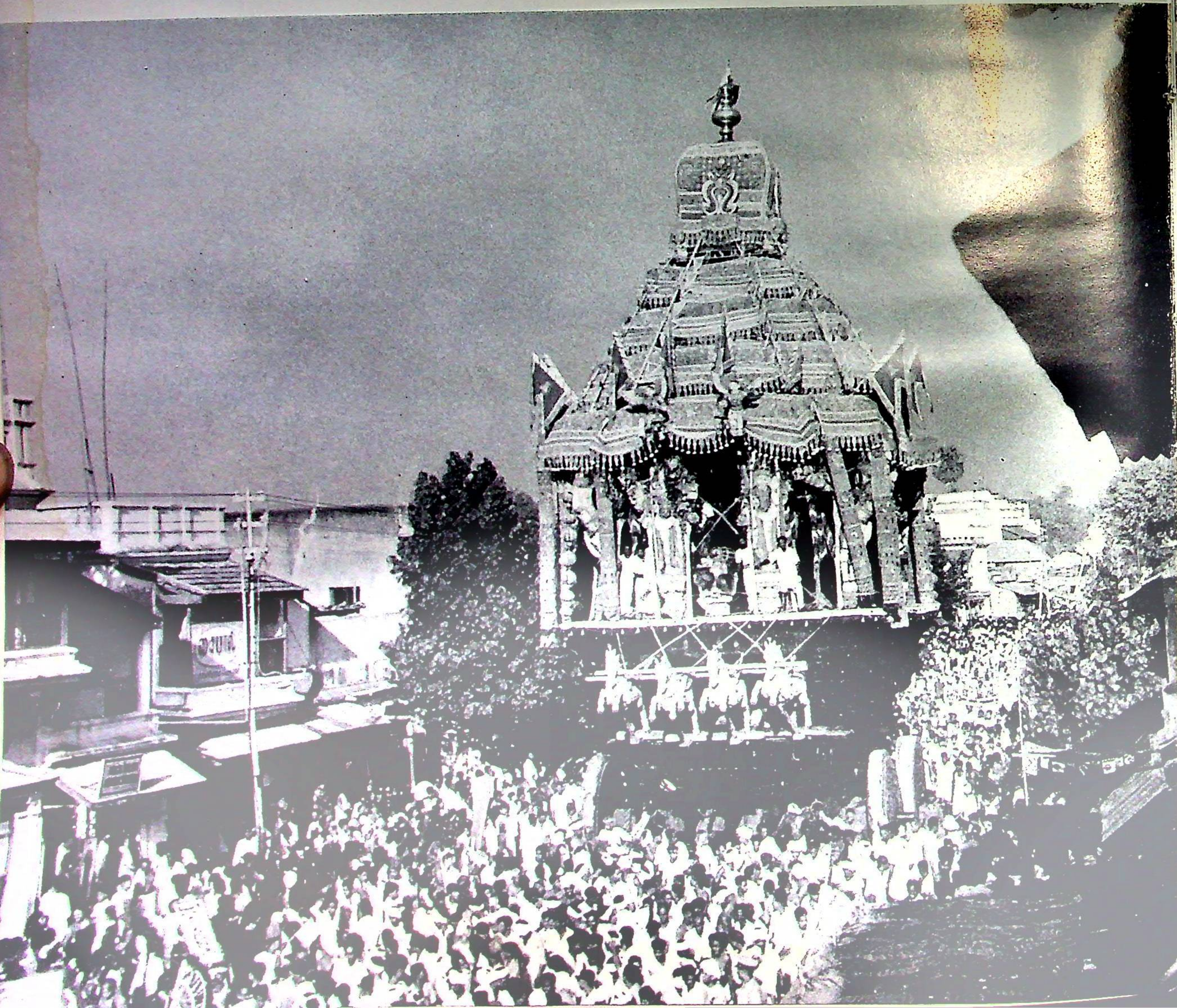
The finest Dravidian temple on the lower west coast is the shrine at Suchindram, complete with *gopuram* (tower-gateway), the sacred tank and pillared corridors. The temple in its present form belongs to the last phase of the Dravidian style (16th century) and is an exquisite lithic translation of the conventional wooden structure of Kerala. All the details of the original wooden model are carved on the ceiling and pillars. The ceiling is not flat but coffered and rests above the beams on a bracket construction. Another well-known example of the Dravida style is the Padmanabhaswami Temple at Trivandrum which also belongs to the last phase of this style.

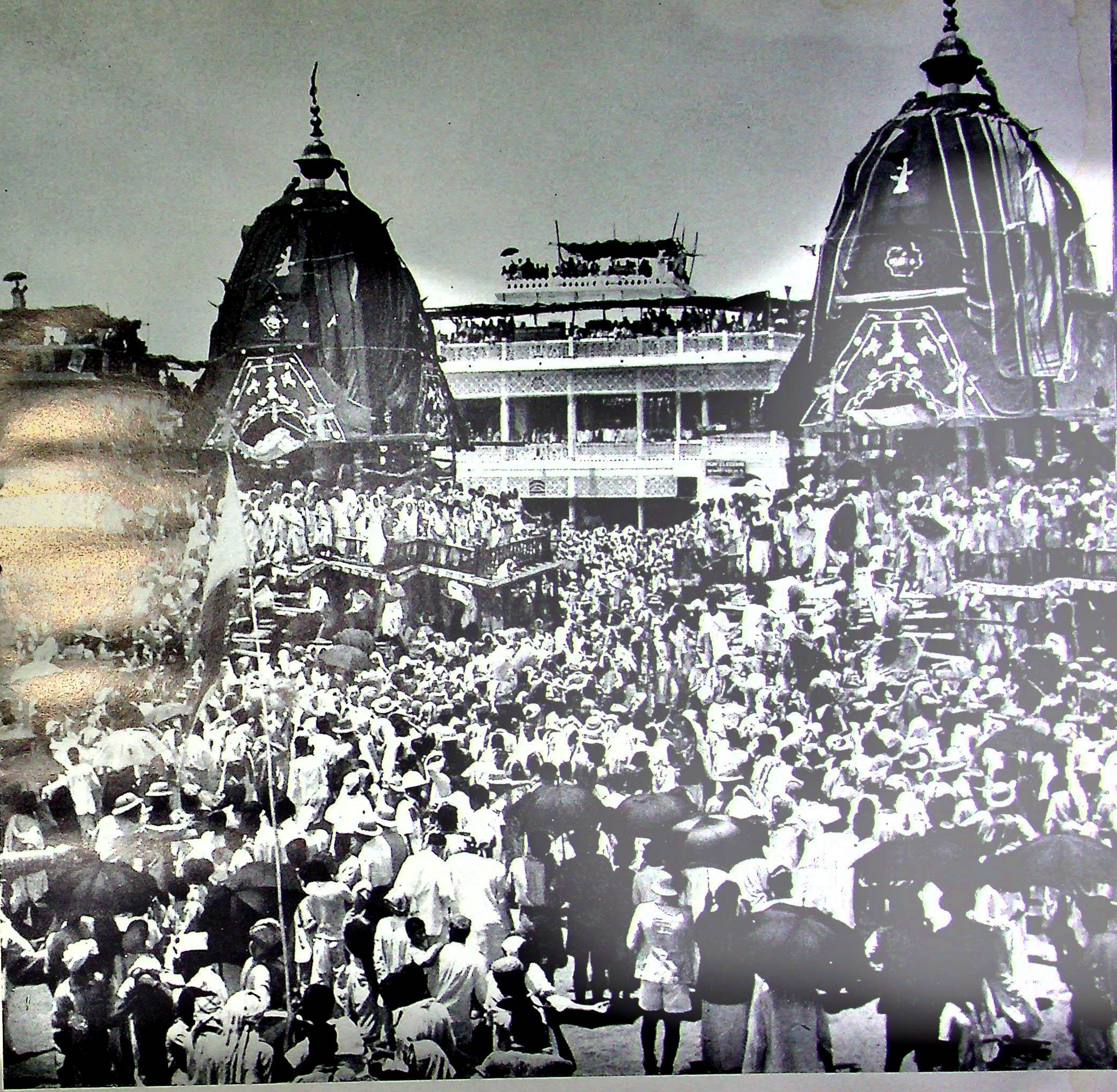
We see the synthesis of the indigenous style and the Dravidian style of the Tamil region in some unique circular temples of the 14th century in Kerala. For instance, the temple at Niramankara is a circular structure standing on a circular platform with a low tower or *vimana* capped with a domical finial. This type of circular *vimana*, although Dravidian in its treatment, is unknown in the rest of India.

PLATES

Introduction

The Indian temple, besides being a place for community worship, has always been the hub of social life for the Hindus. Temple festivals are occasions of great social rejoicing when people gather in their thousands. Temple deities adorned with flowers and ornaments are placed in huge, gaily decorated wooden cars and taken out in procession. Below is the Car of the Madurai Temple (Madras State) during the Chittirai festival.

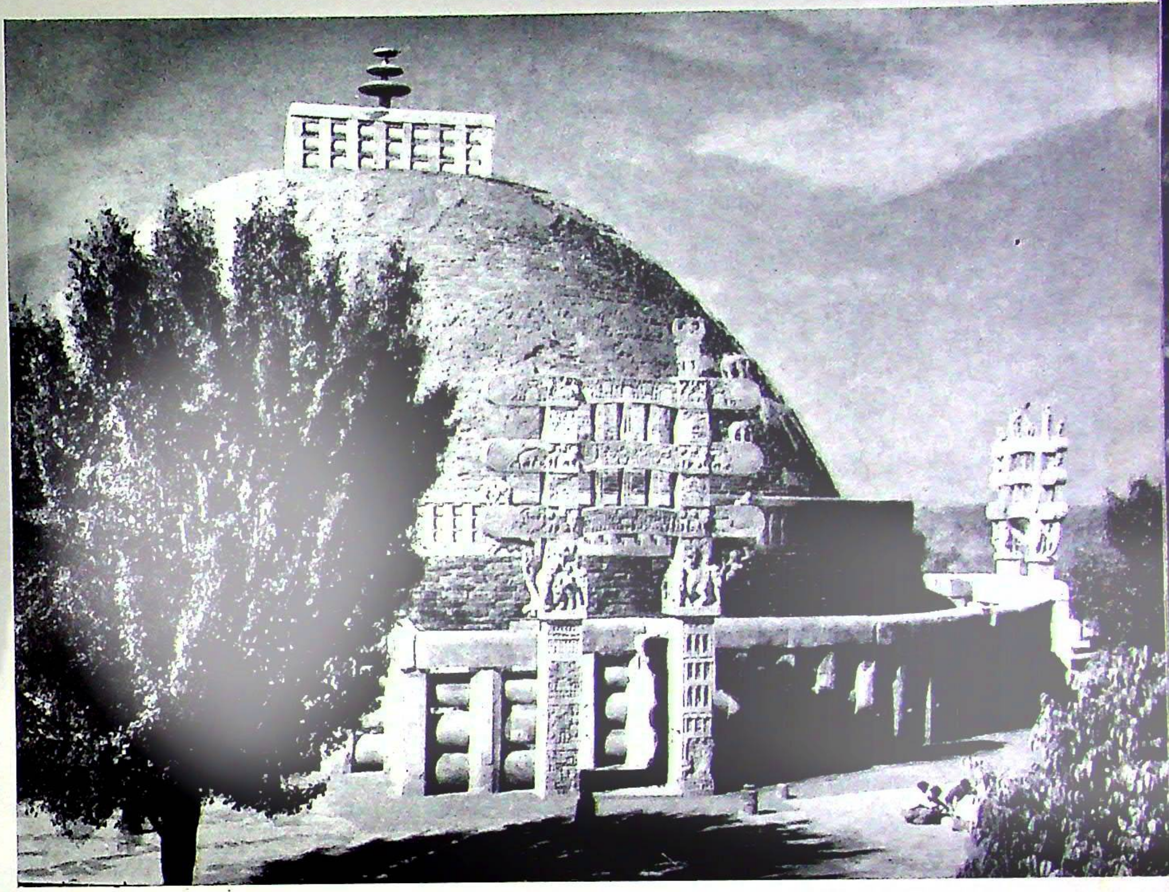




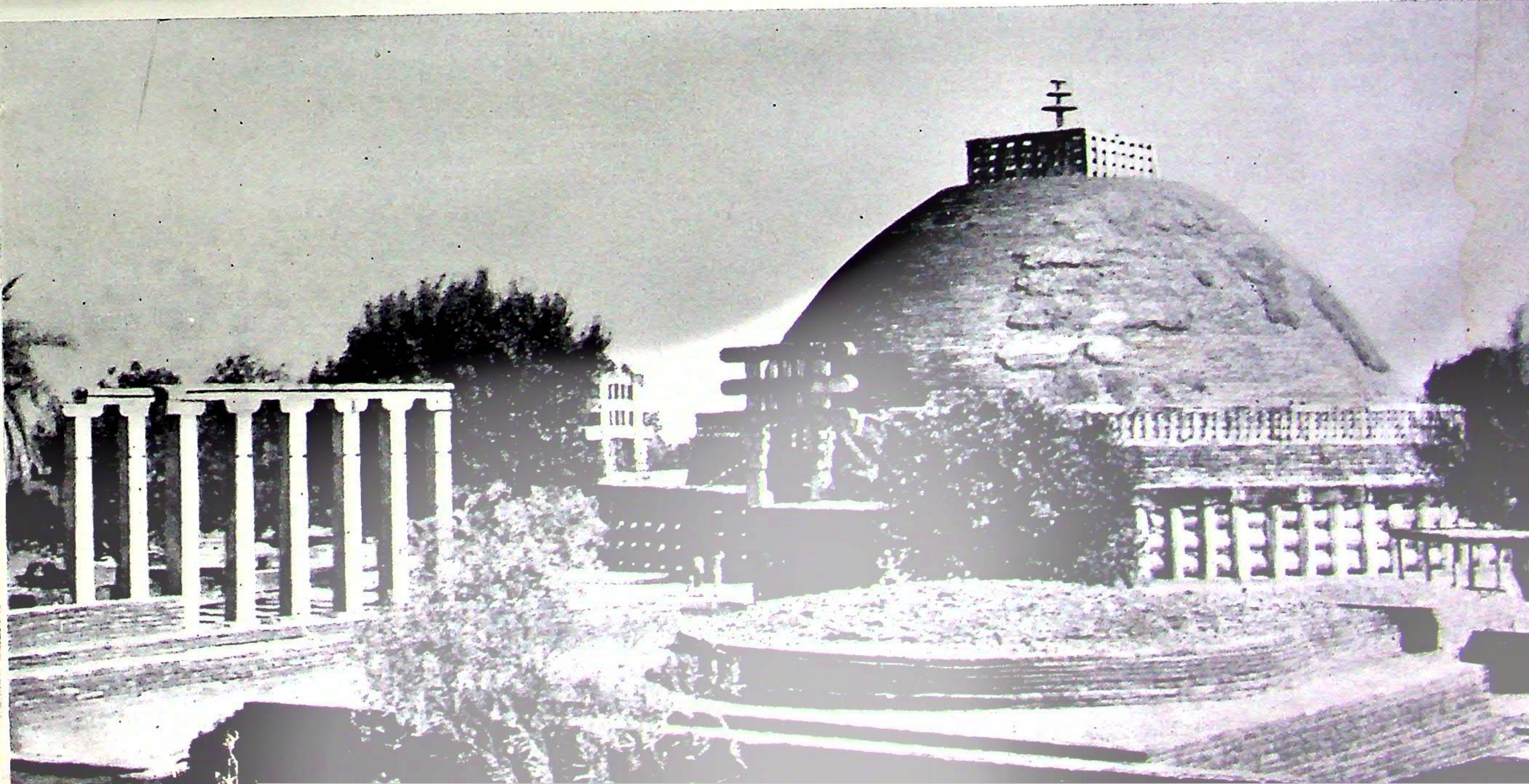
The great Car Festival of Lord Jagannath at Puri

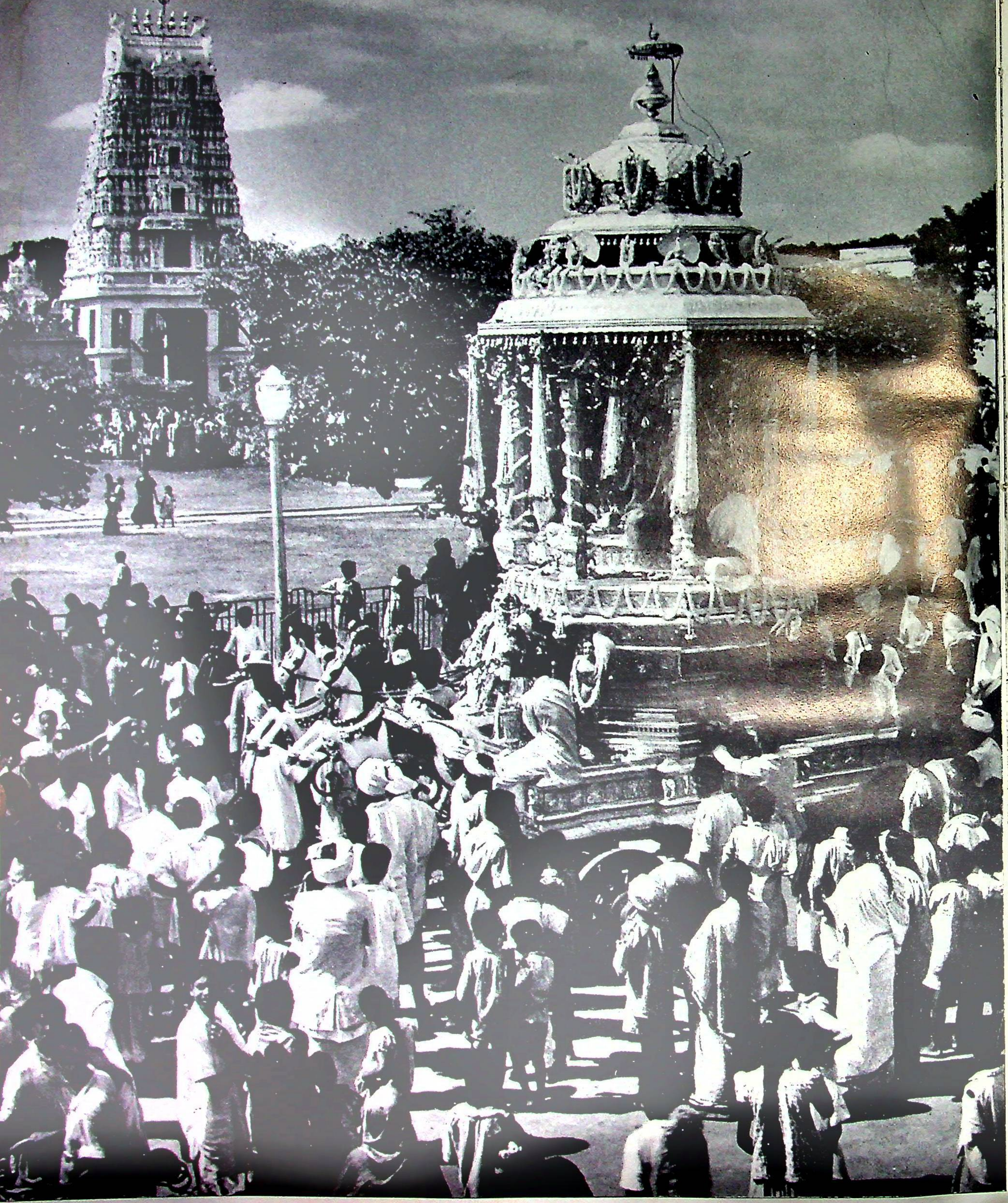
A colourful temple car festival at Bangalore

Early Beginnings



The great hemispherical Stupa of Sanchi (2nd century B.C.) is built of bricks. The elegant railing running round it encloses a path for circumambulation.





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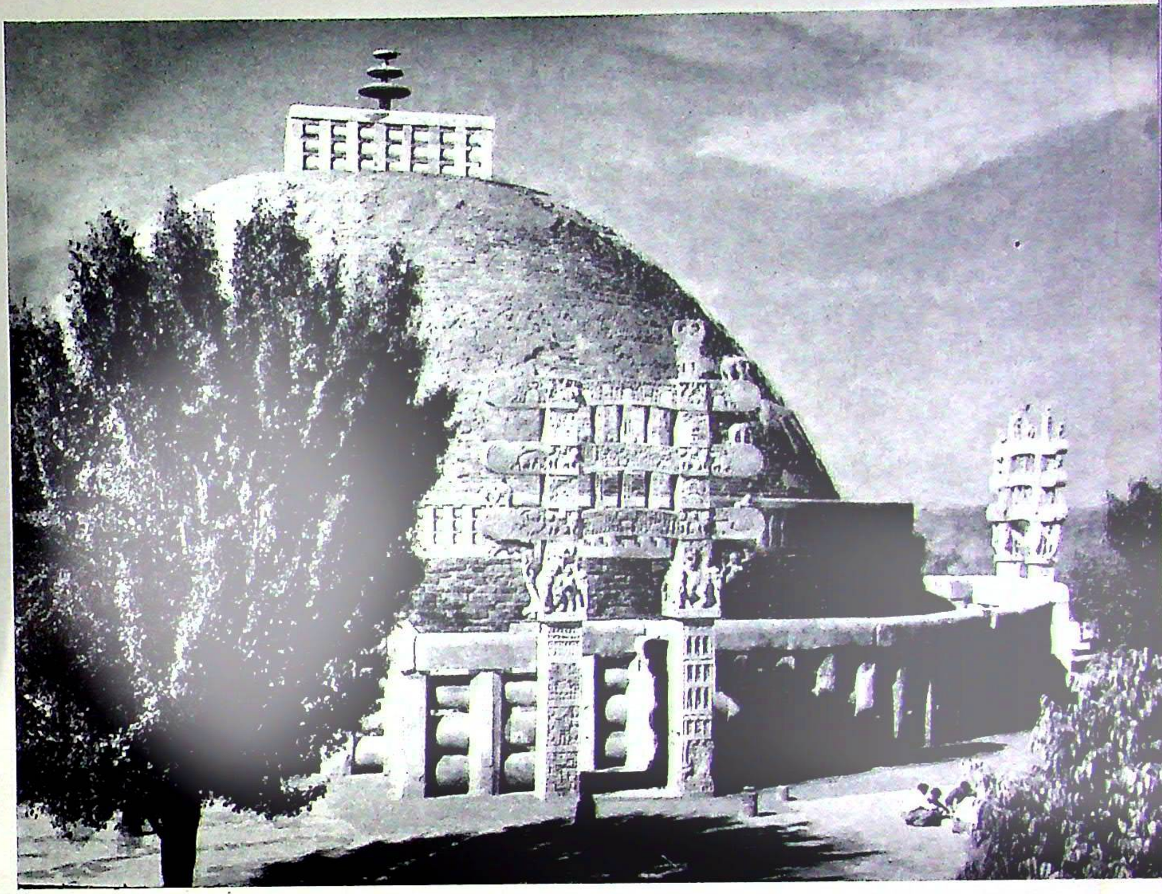

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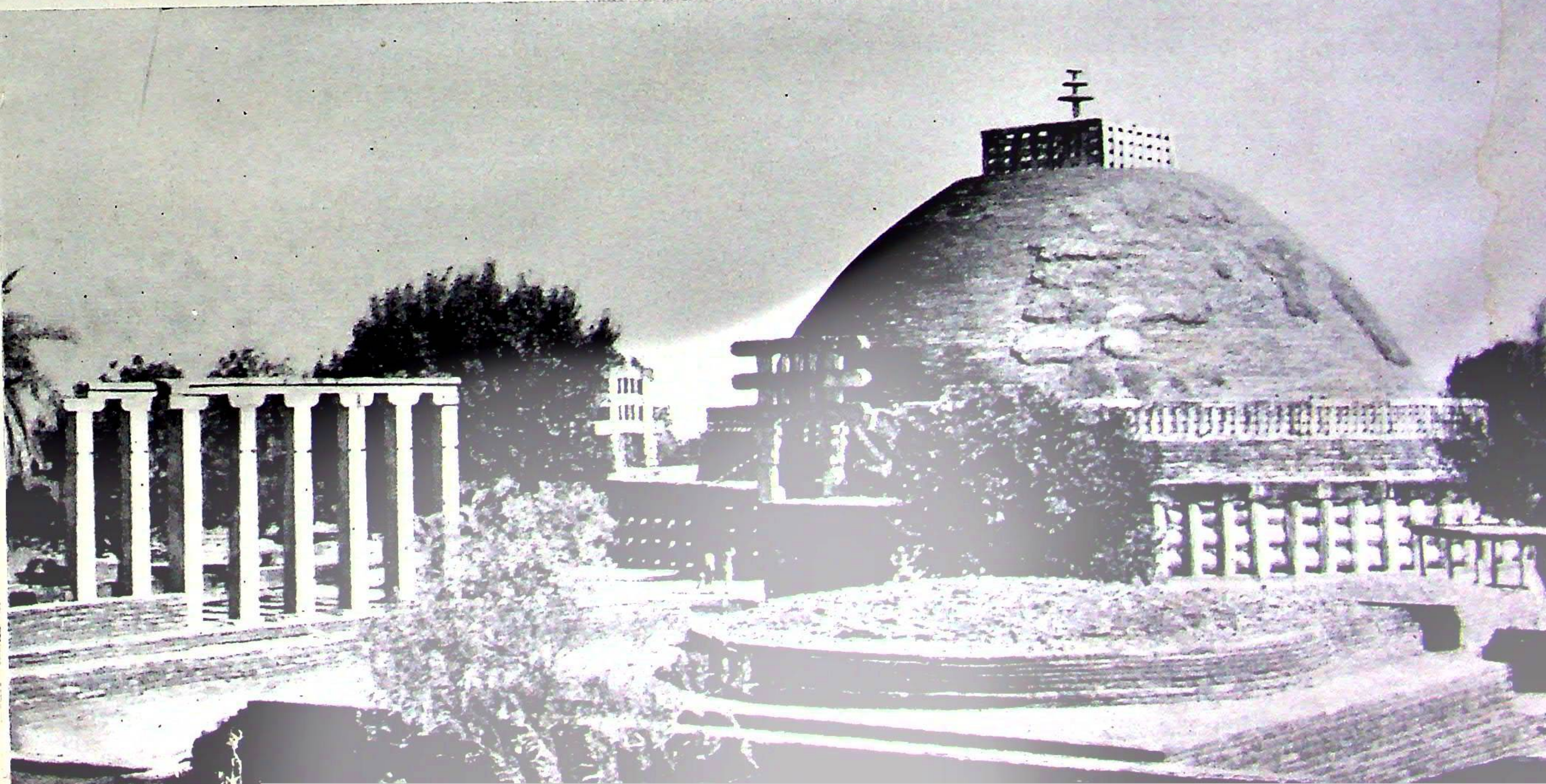
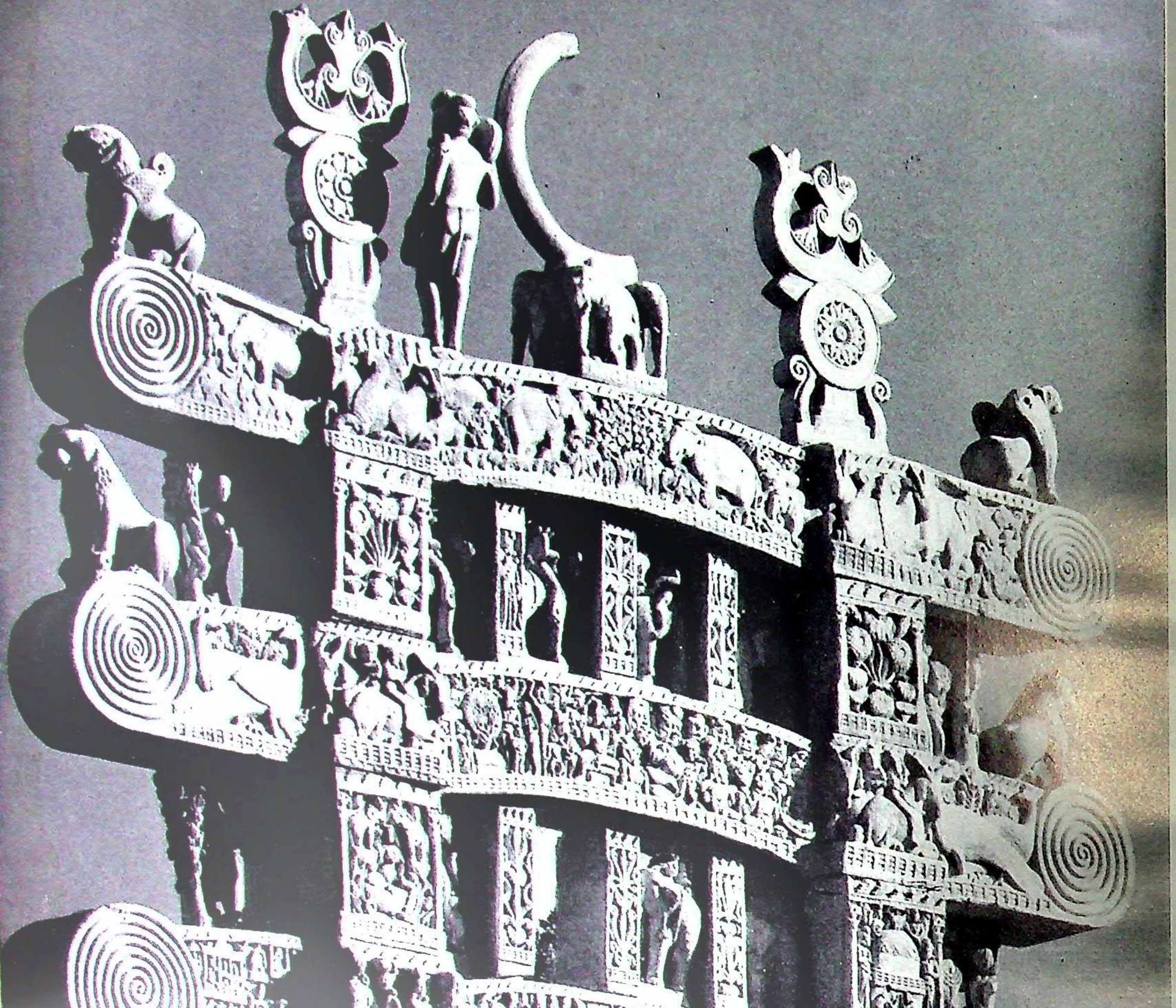
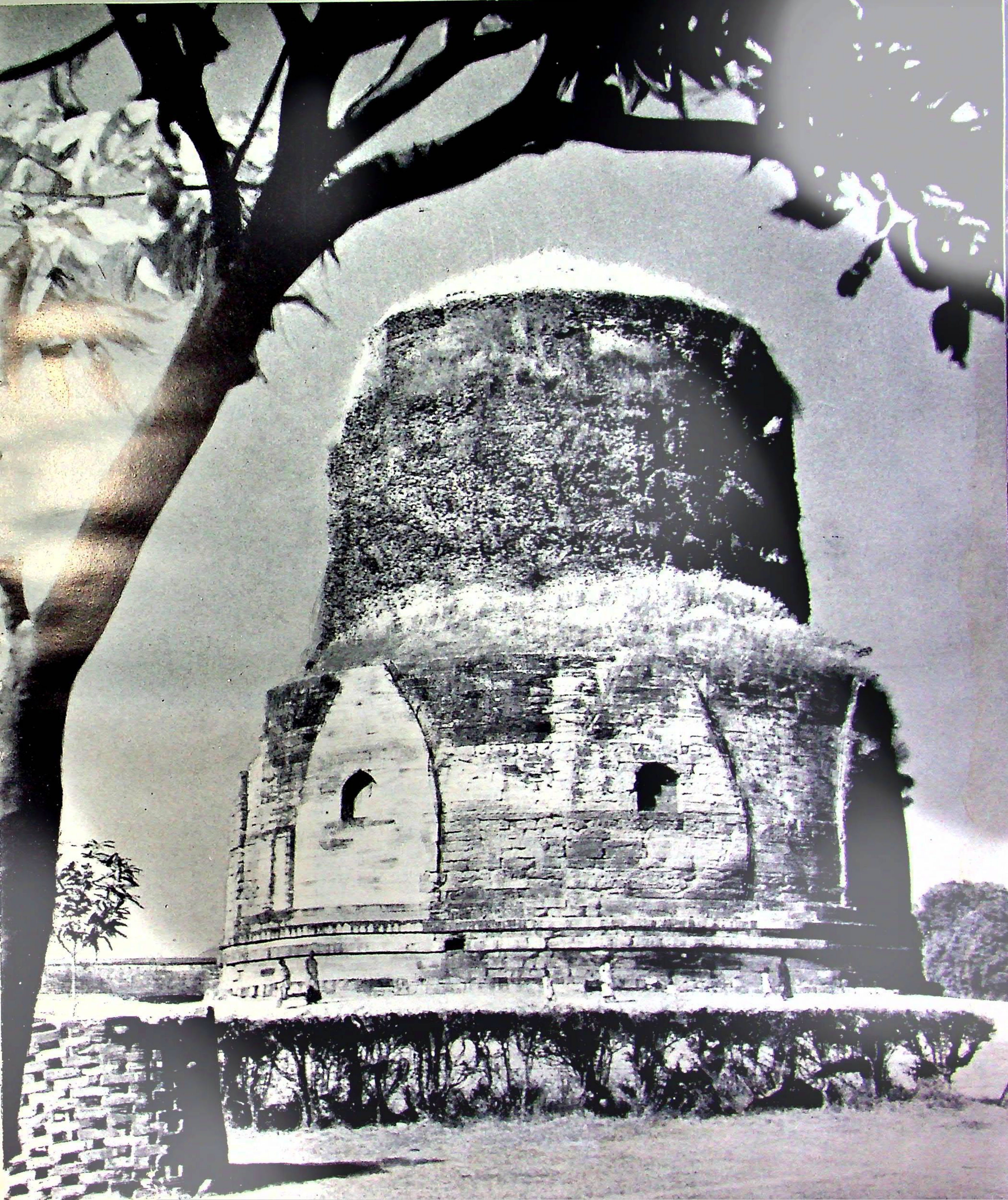
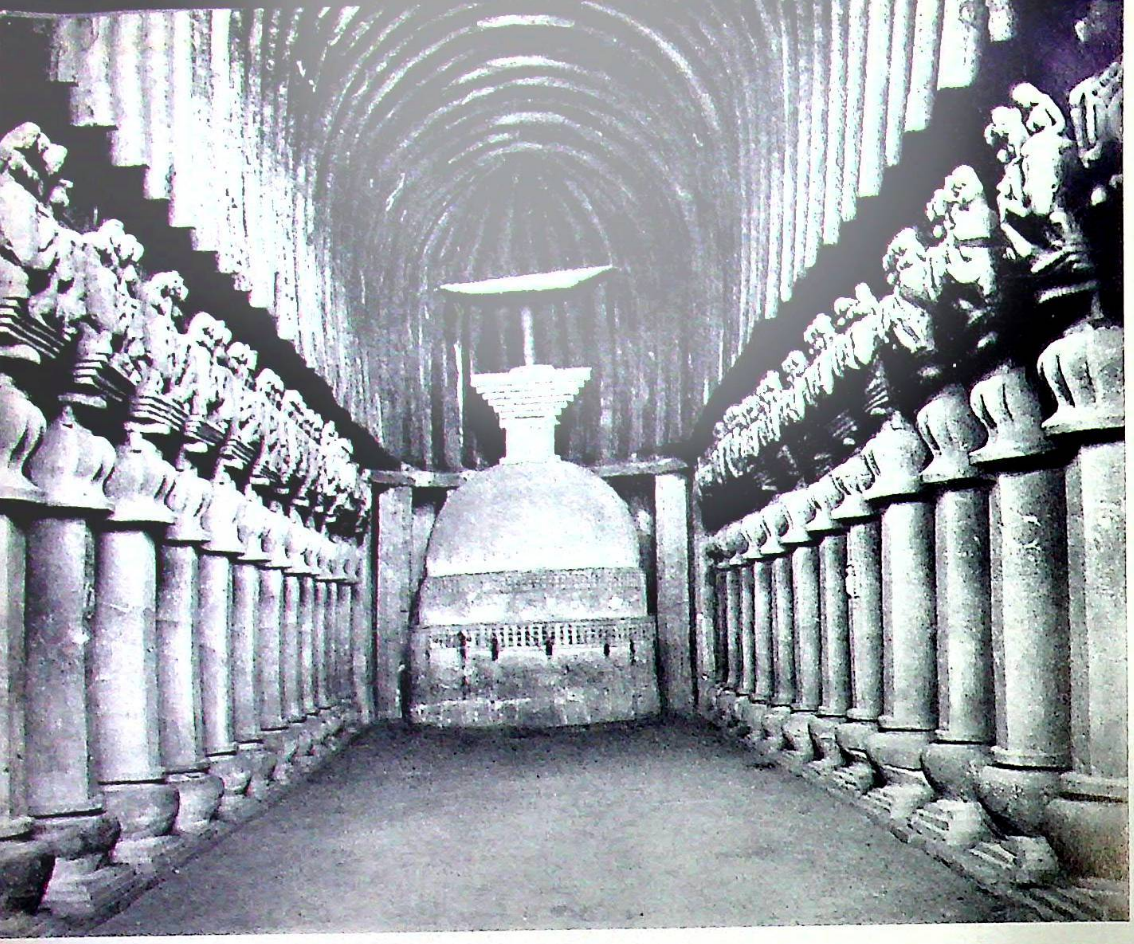




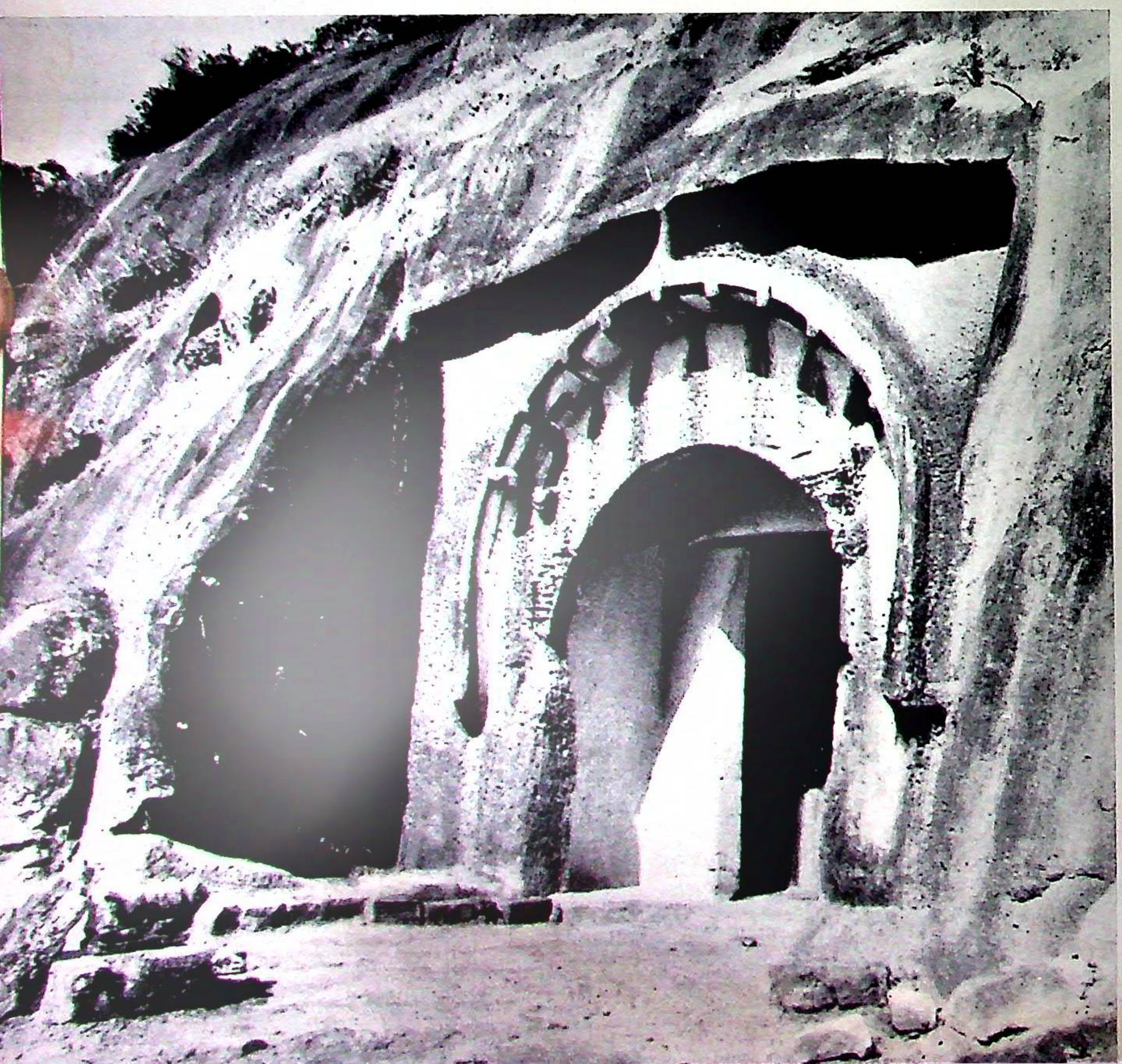
This intricately carved *torana* is one of the four gateways adorning the Sanchi Stupa at the cardinal points.

The Dhamek Stupa at Sarnath near Banaras is the only other surviving Stupa. Located in what must have been the Deer Park, it commemorates the first sermon preached by the Buddha.

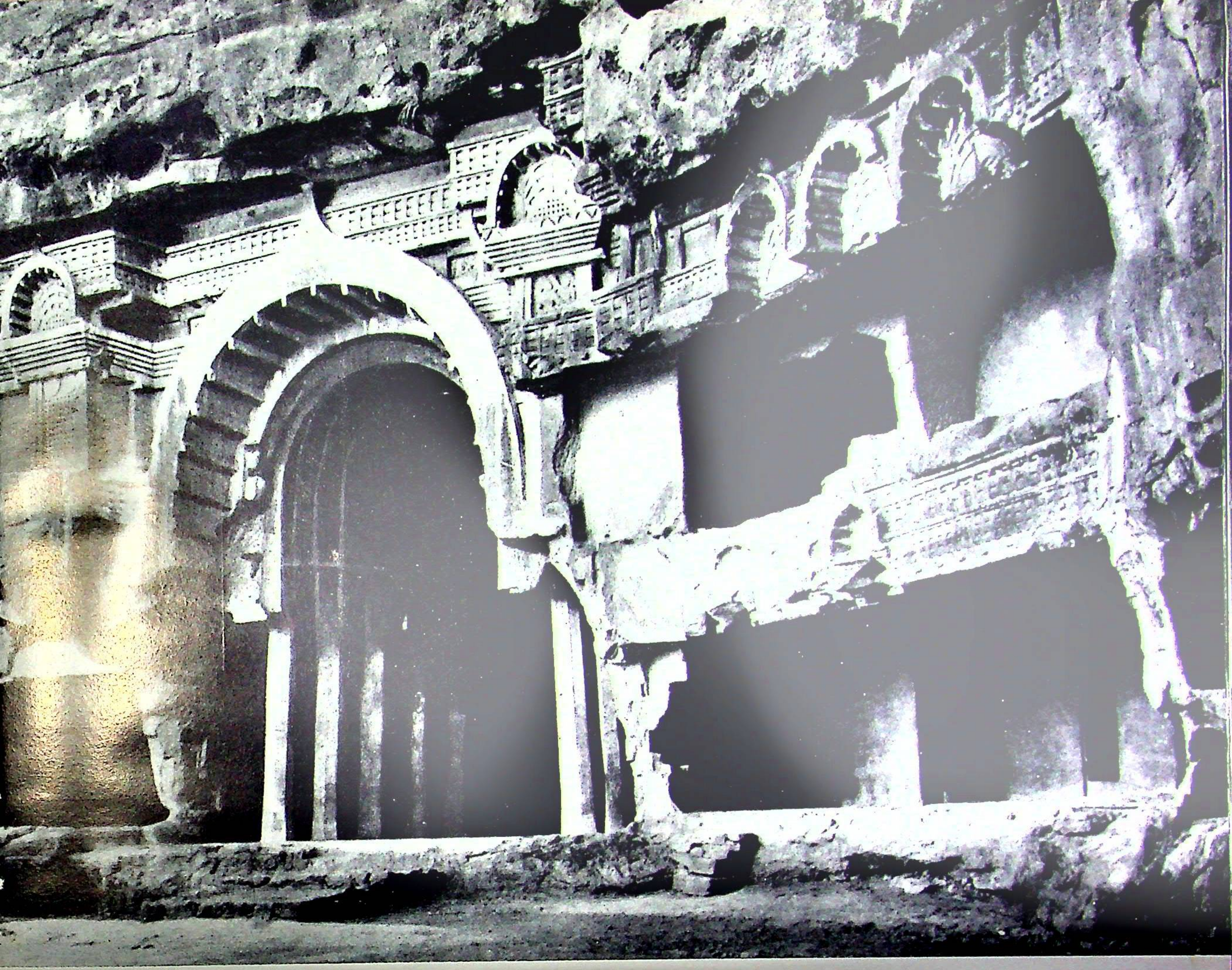




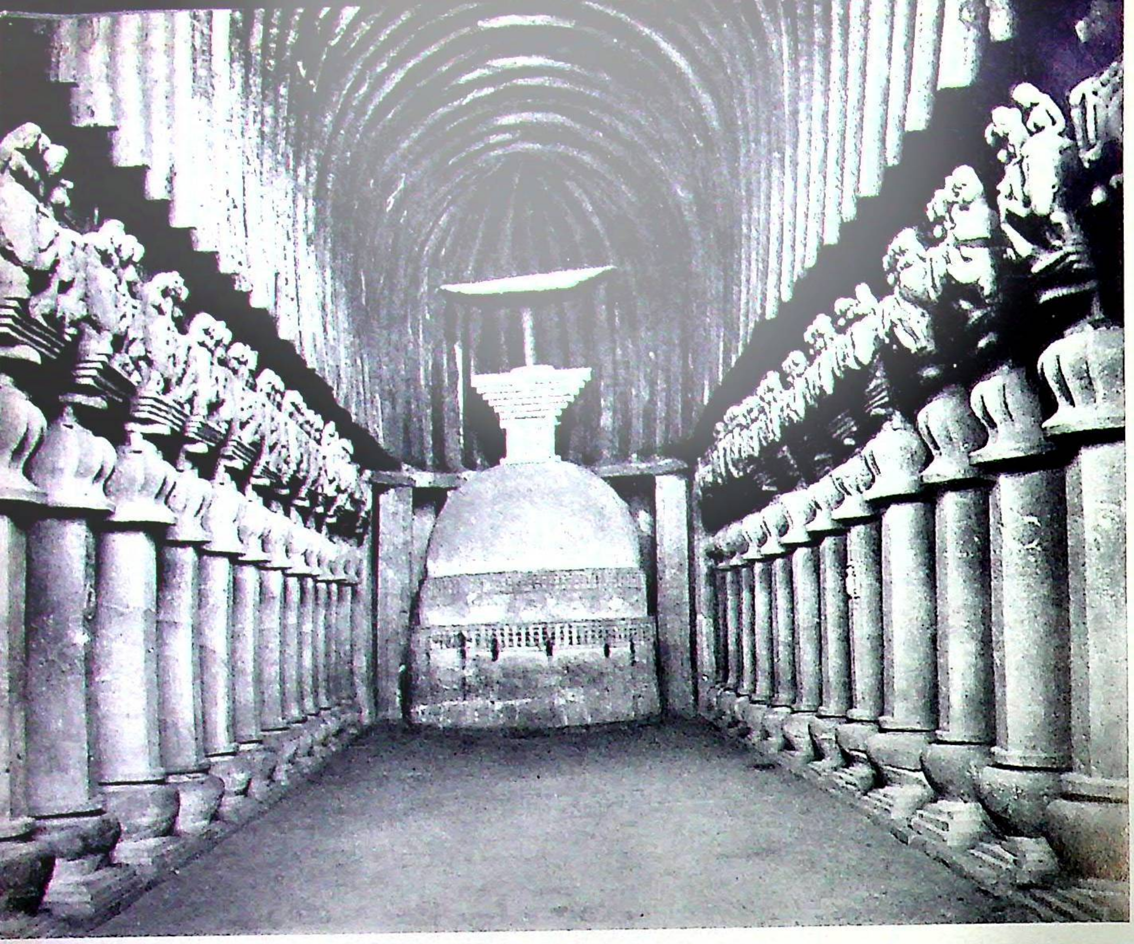
Some of the rock-cut chapels are of enormous dimensions. This Buddhist chapel at Karle is 124 feet long, 45 feet wide and 46 feet high.



Most of the early rock-cut temples are simple and unpretentious. This 2nd-century (B.C.) cave in Guntupalli in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh, is a faithful replica of a simple wooden structure.



The rock-cut Chaitya always consisted of a colonnade, an apsidal end and a horse-shoe shaped archway. This facade of the Chaitya at Bhaja displays the horse-shoe motif in its most elegant form.



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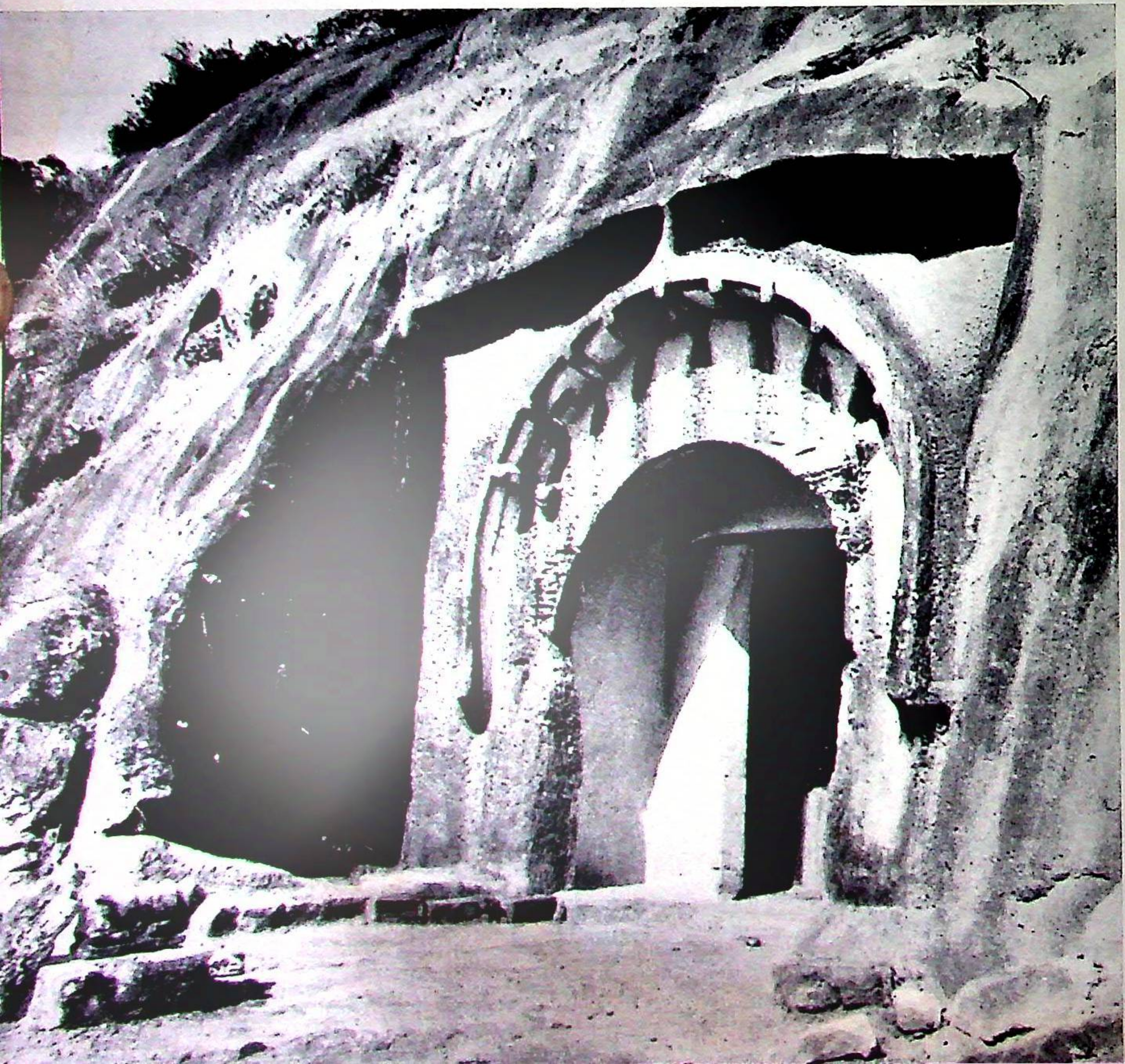

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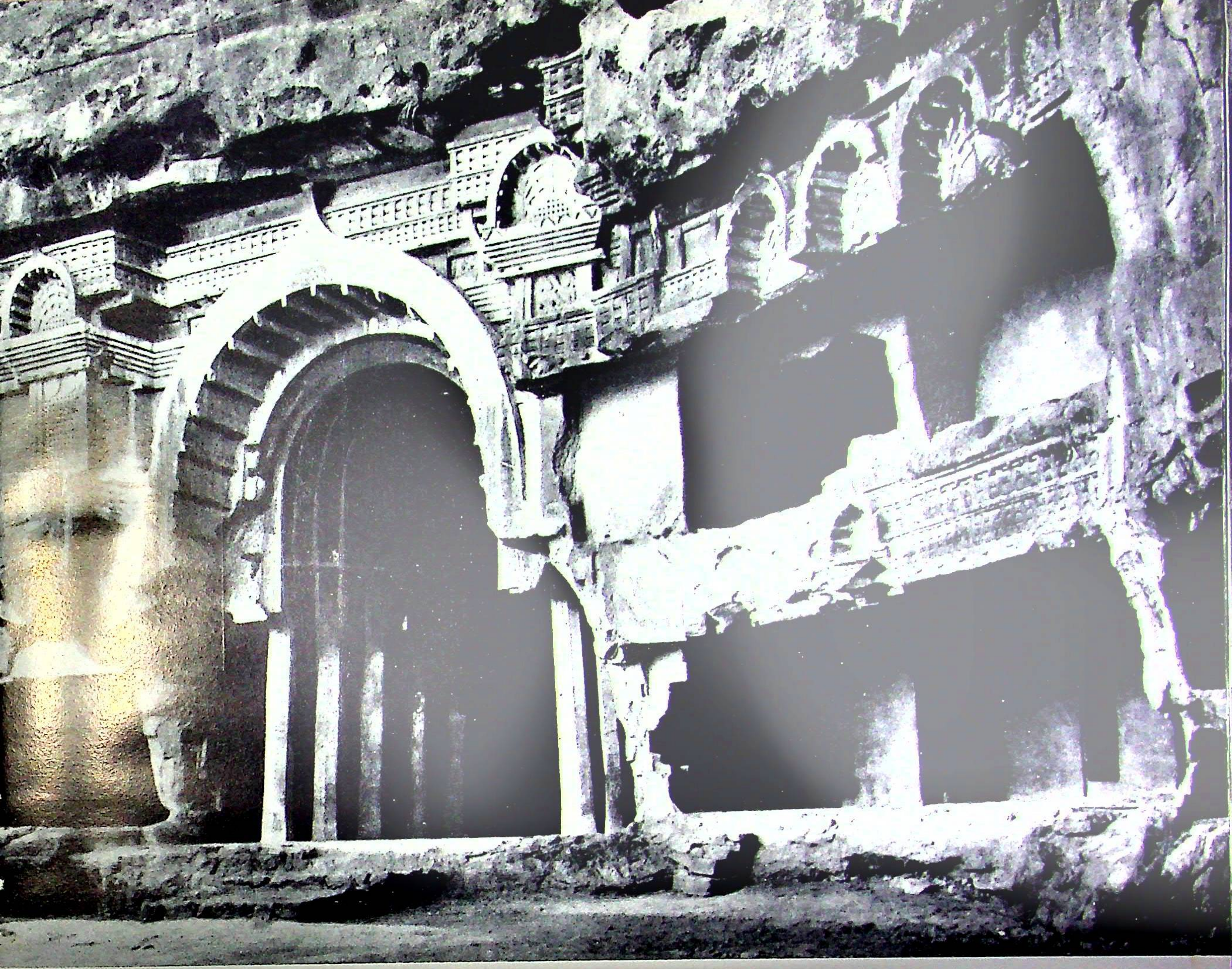

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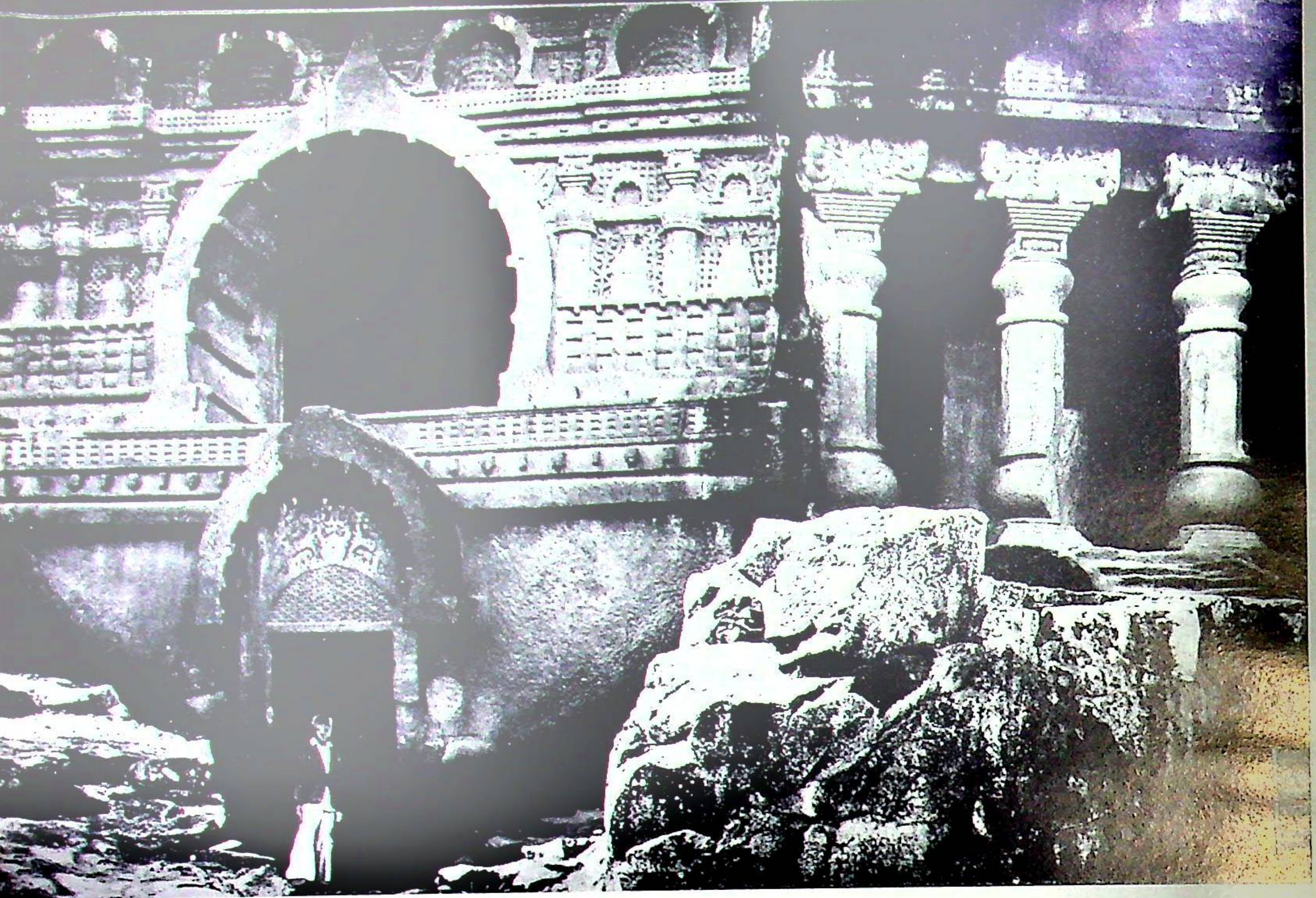
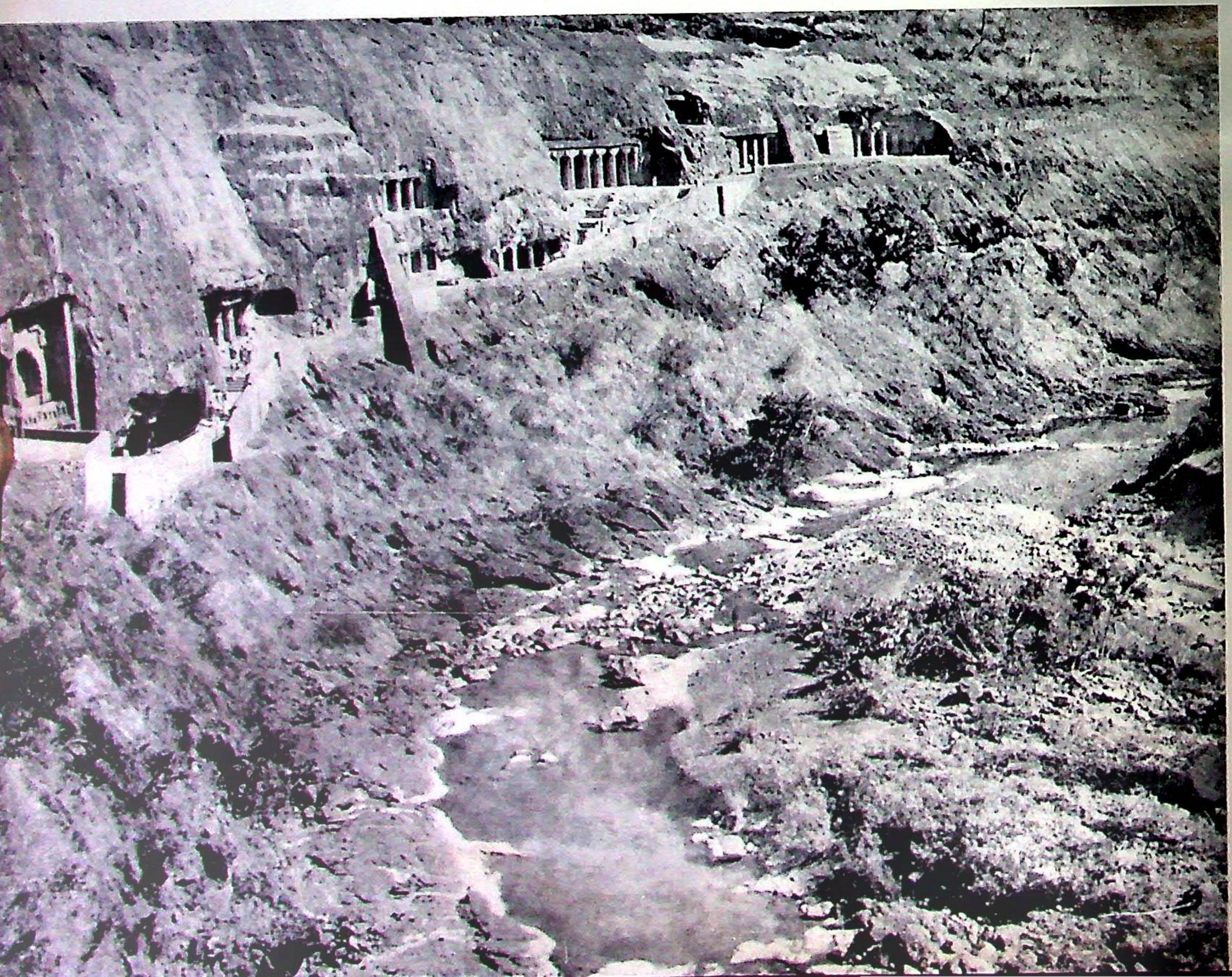
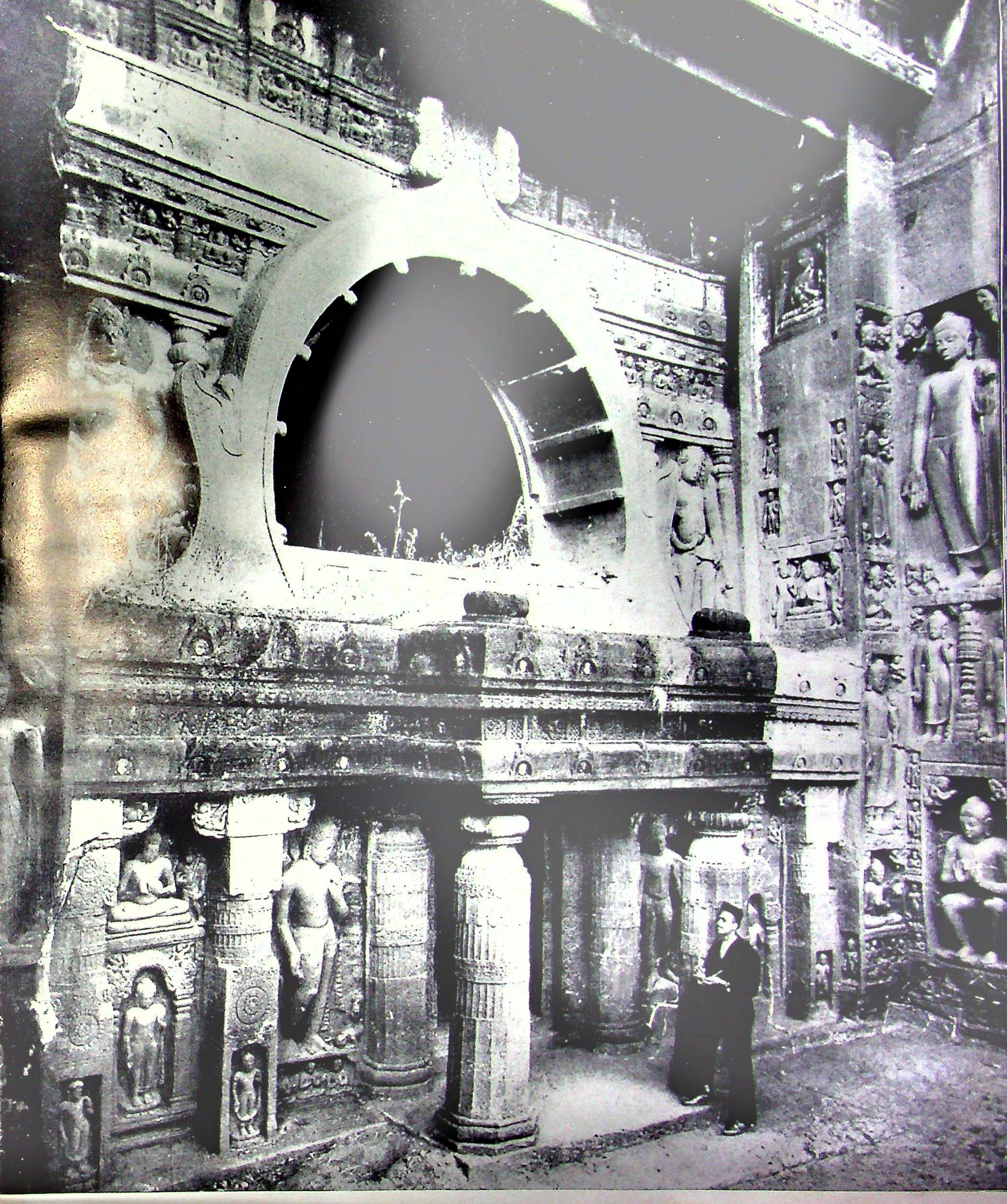


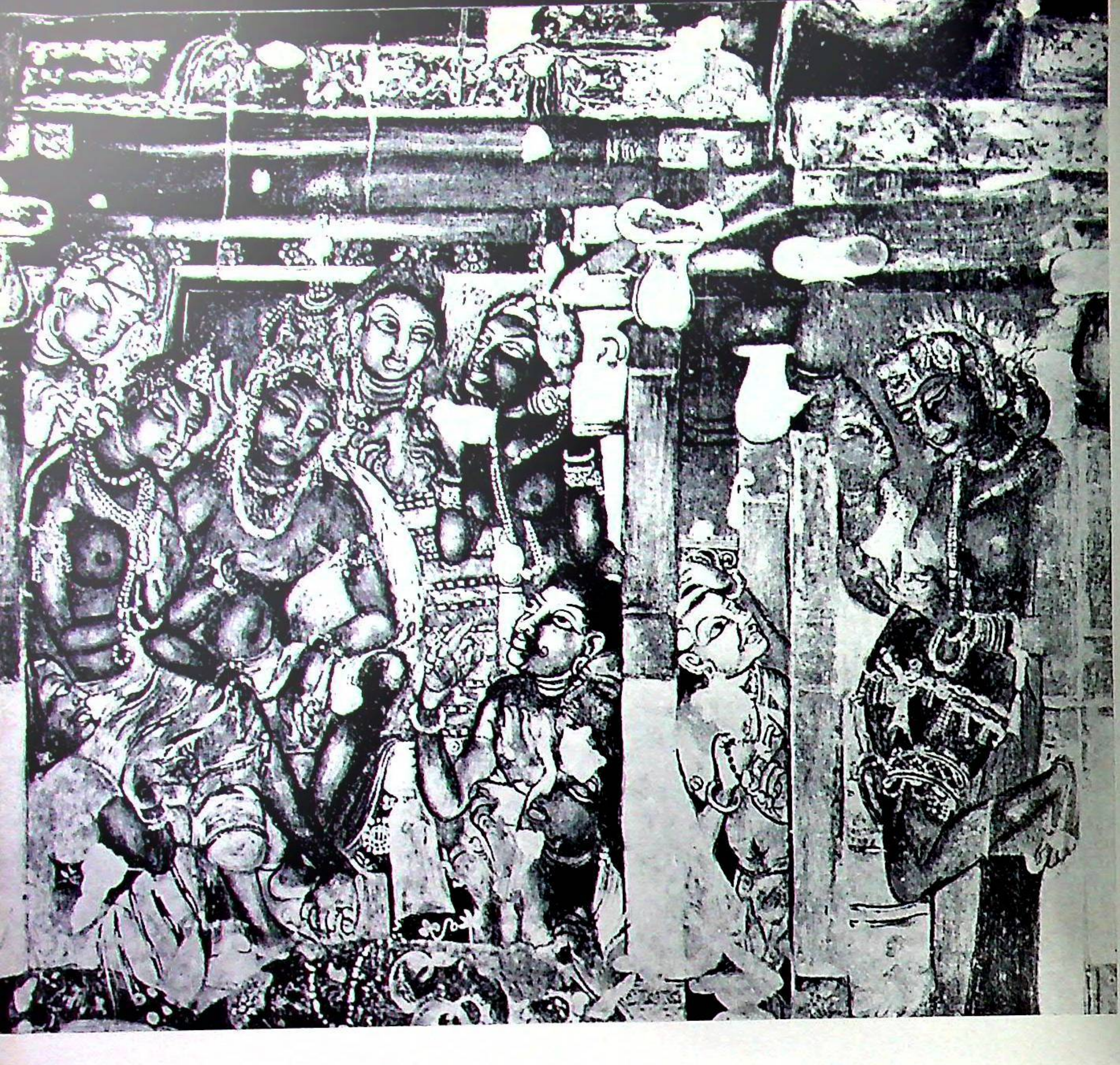
Excavated near the Chaityas are the Viharas (monasteries) where monks spent their conventual life. These two caves at Pardulera near Nasik are typical examples of this practice.

Ajanta Caves: The 30 rock-hewn chapels and monasteries of Ajanta, cut into the scarp of a sickle-shaped cliff, overlook a picturesque ravine with a stream flowing through it.



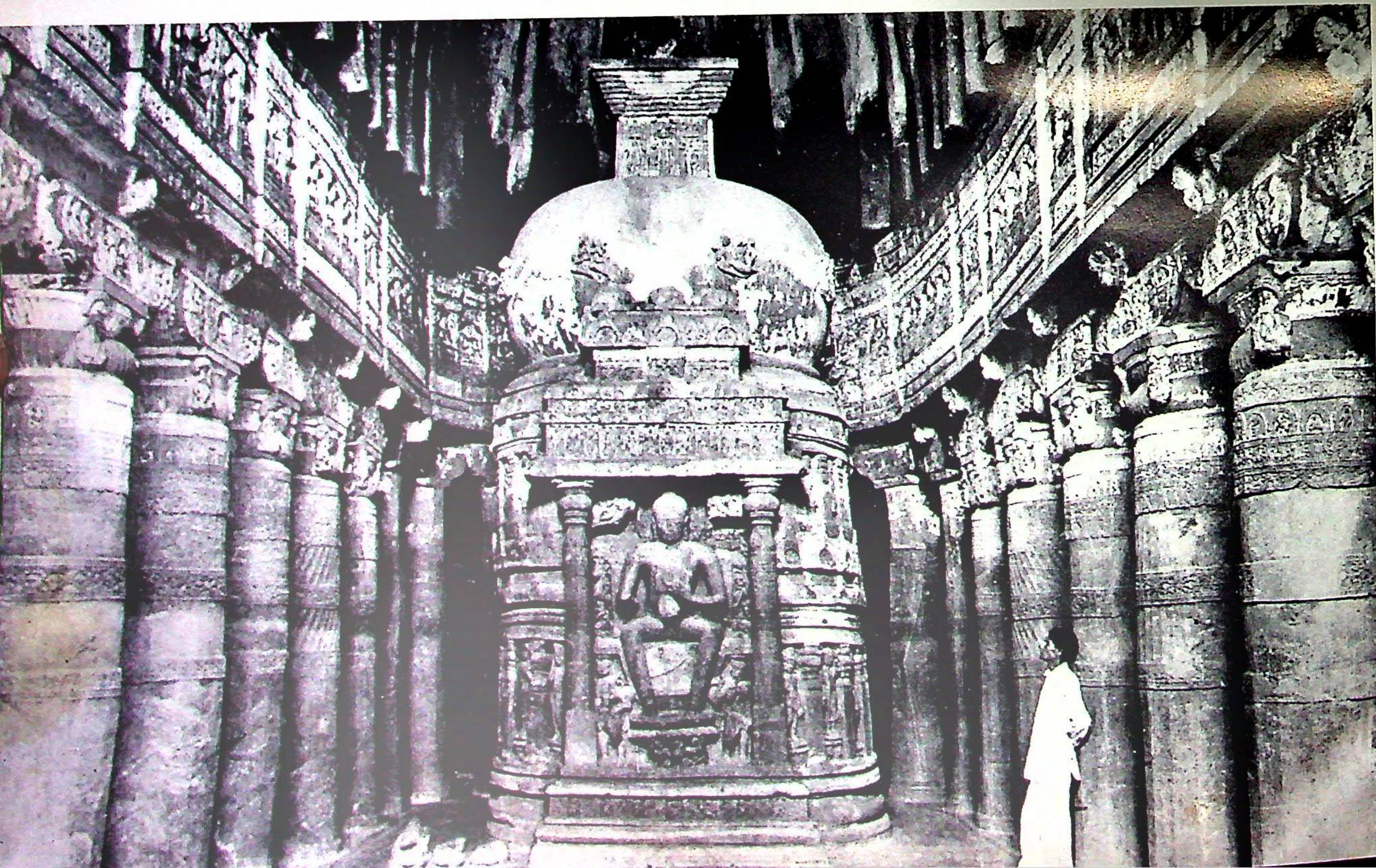


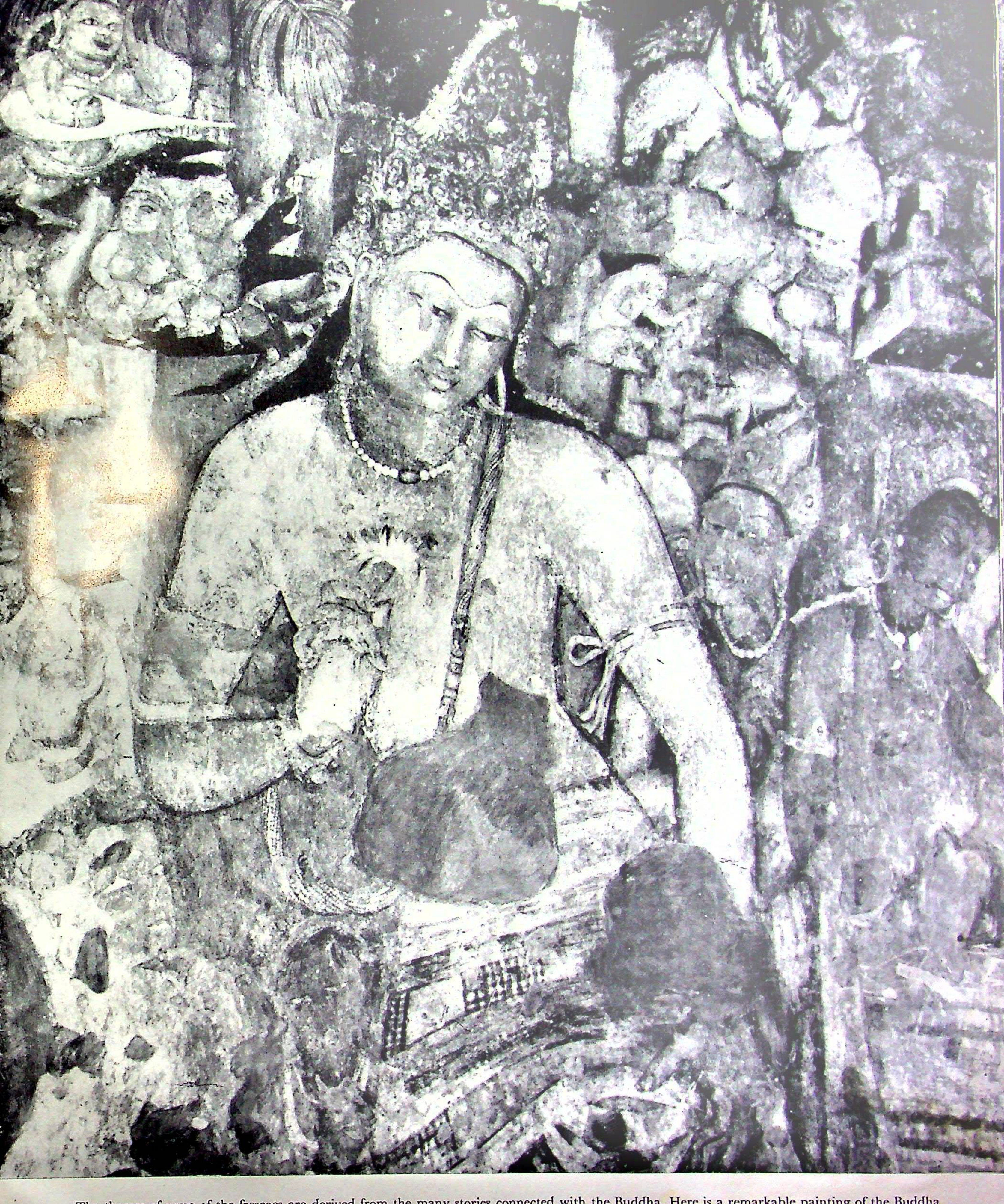
With the spread of Mahayana Buddhism in the 5th and 6th centuries Ajanta became a centre of artistic activity. Large chapels and monasteries rich in iconographic art came to be excavated. Cave No. 19 in Ajanta is conspicuous for its beautiful facade with porch.



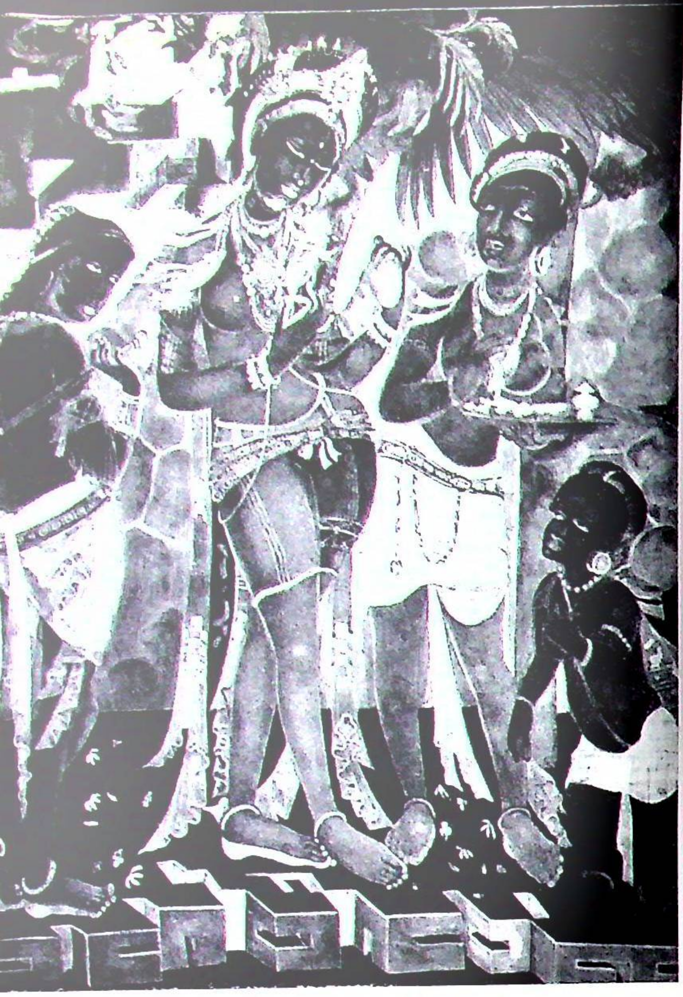
A fresco from Ajanta depicting the elegant timber-built interiors of palace halls peopled by bejewelled princes and princesses, retinues of attendants, music and dancing scenes, yellow-robed monks and a host of other themes from contemporary life.

The interior of Cave No. 26, Ajanta, is notable for its exquisite carvings.



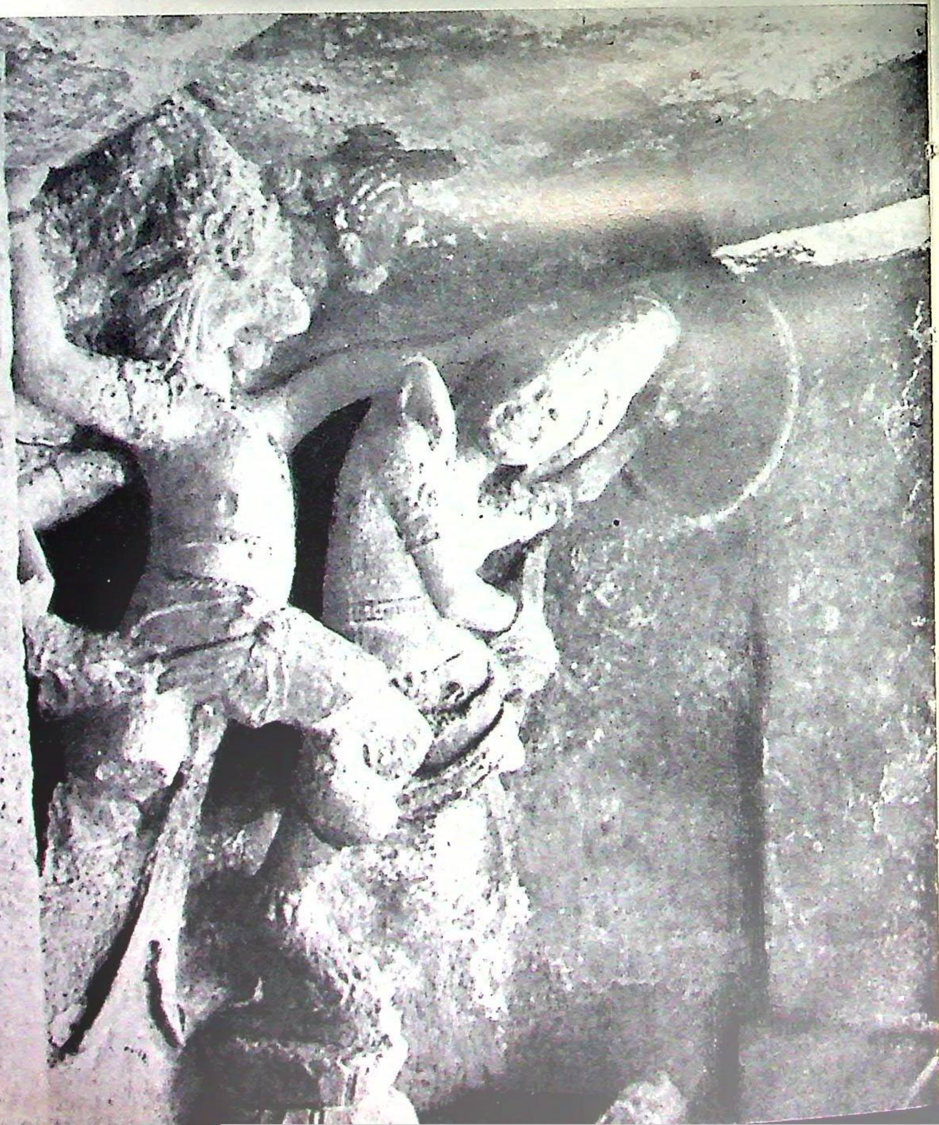


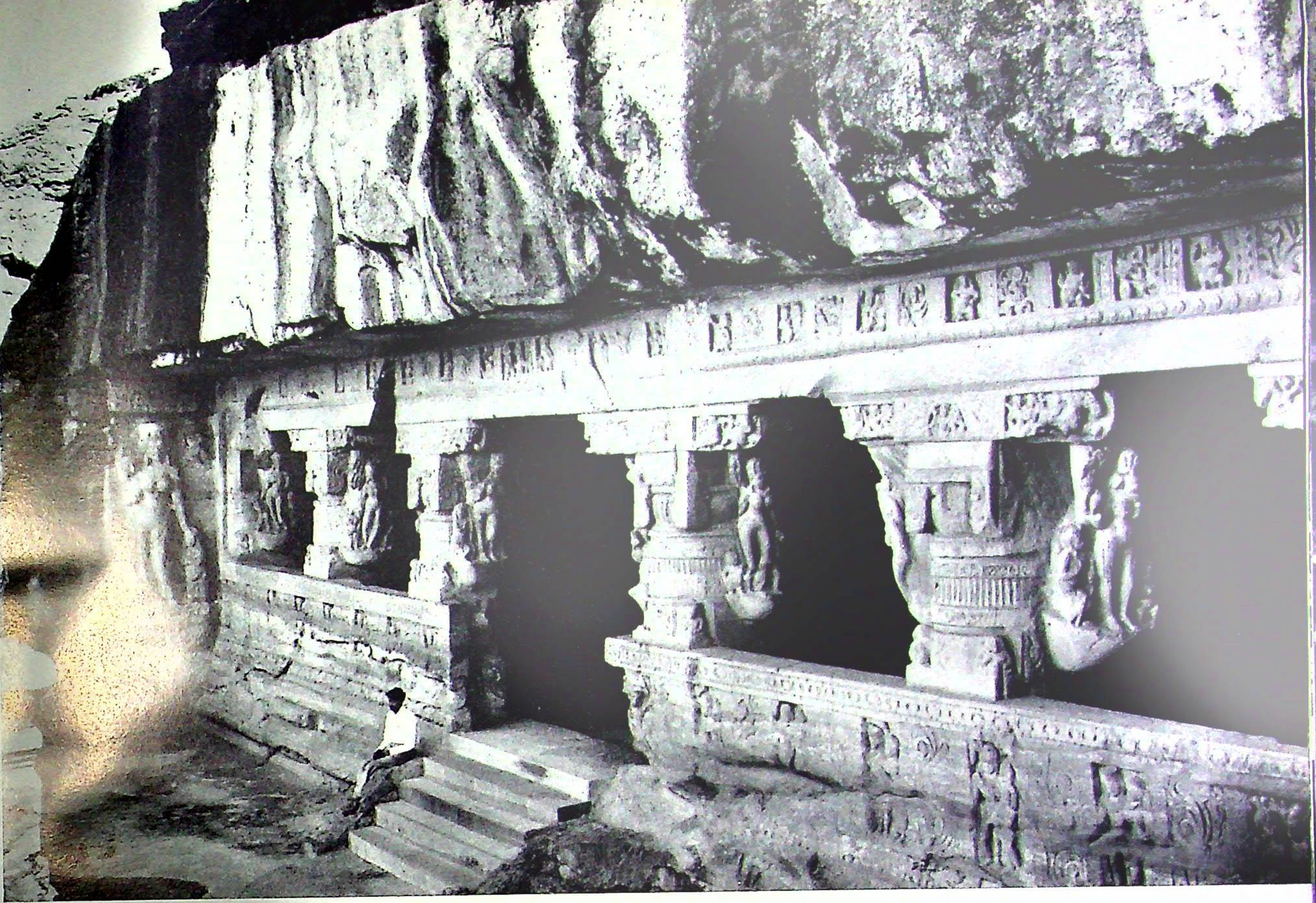
The themes of some of the frescoes are derived from the many stories connected with the Buddha. Here is a remarkable painting of the Buddha as Prince in a deeply contemplative mood.



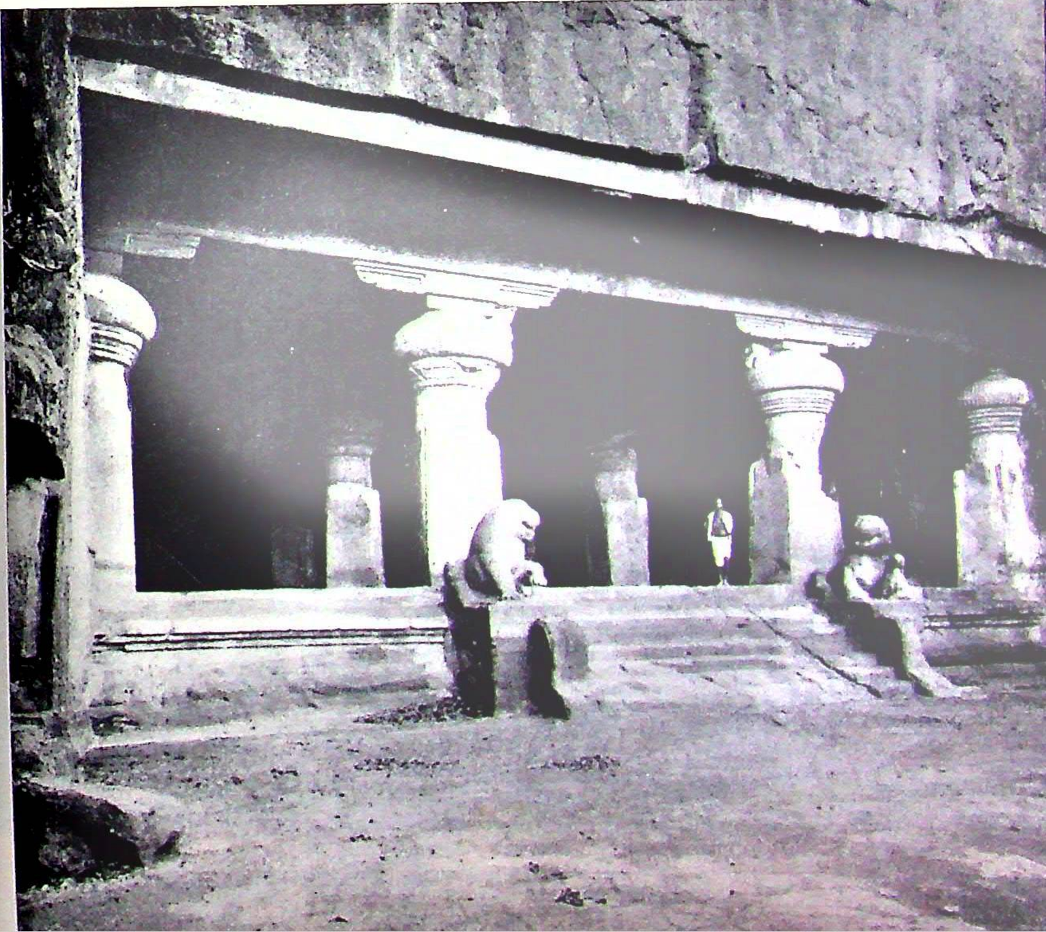
A fresco from Cave 17 depicting a princess with her attendants.

The wall space in the pillared hall of the Dasavatara Cave at Ellora is broken up by niches filled with figure-sculptures of immense size. This panel depicts the lion-headed incarnation of Vishnu in combat with the demon Hiranya Kasipu.

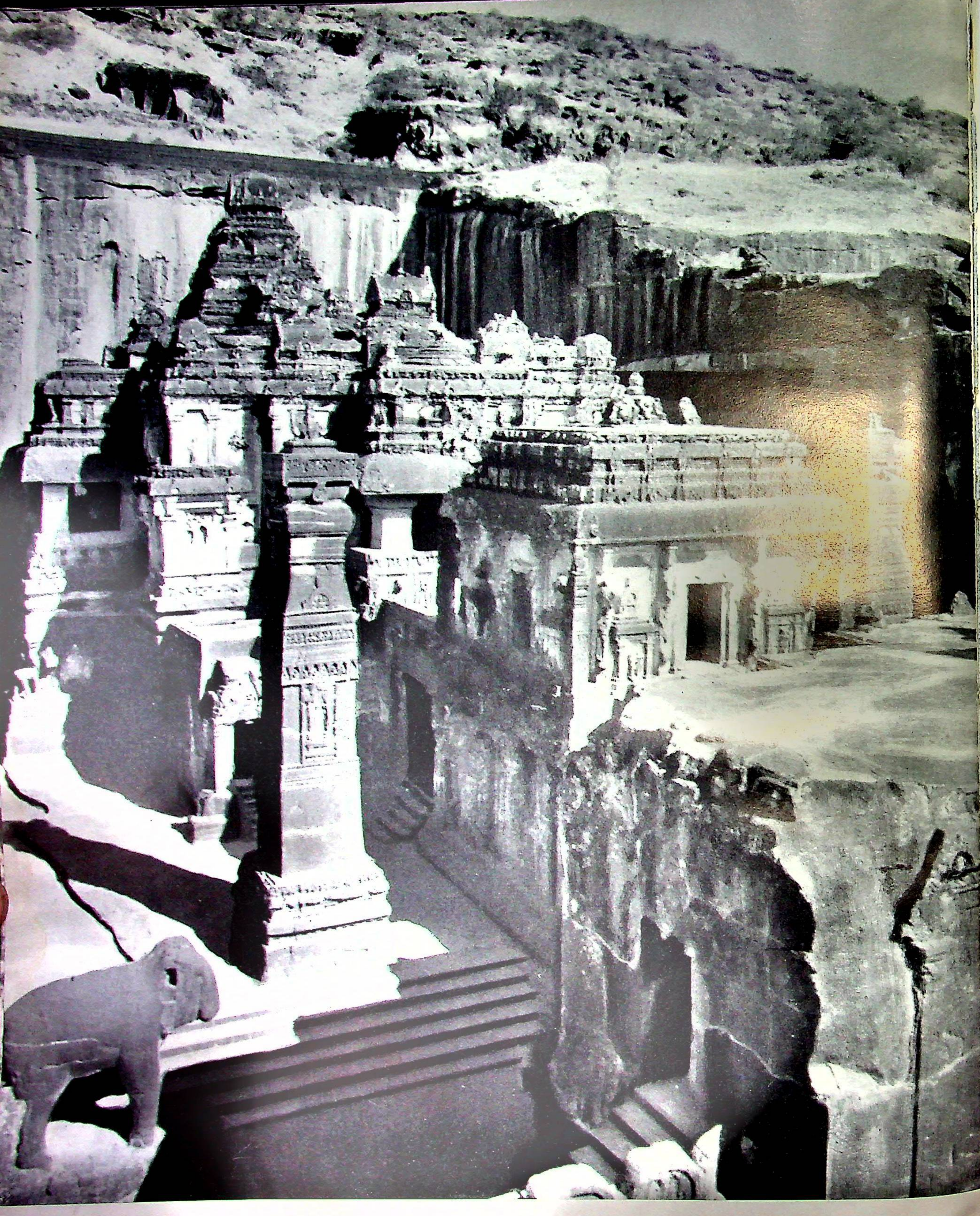




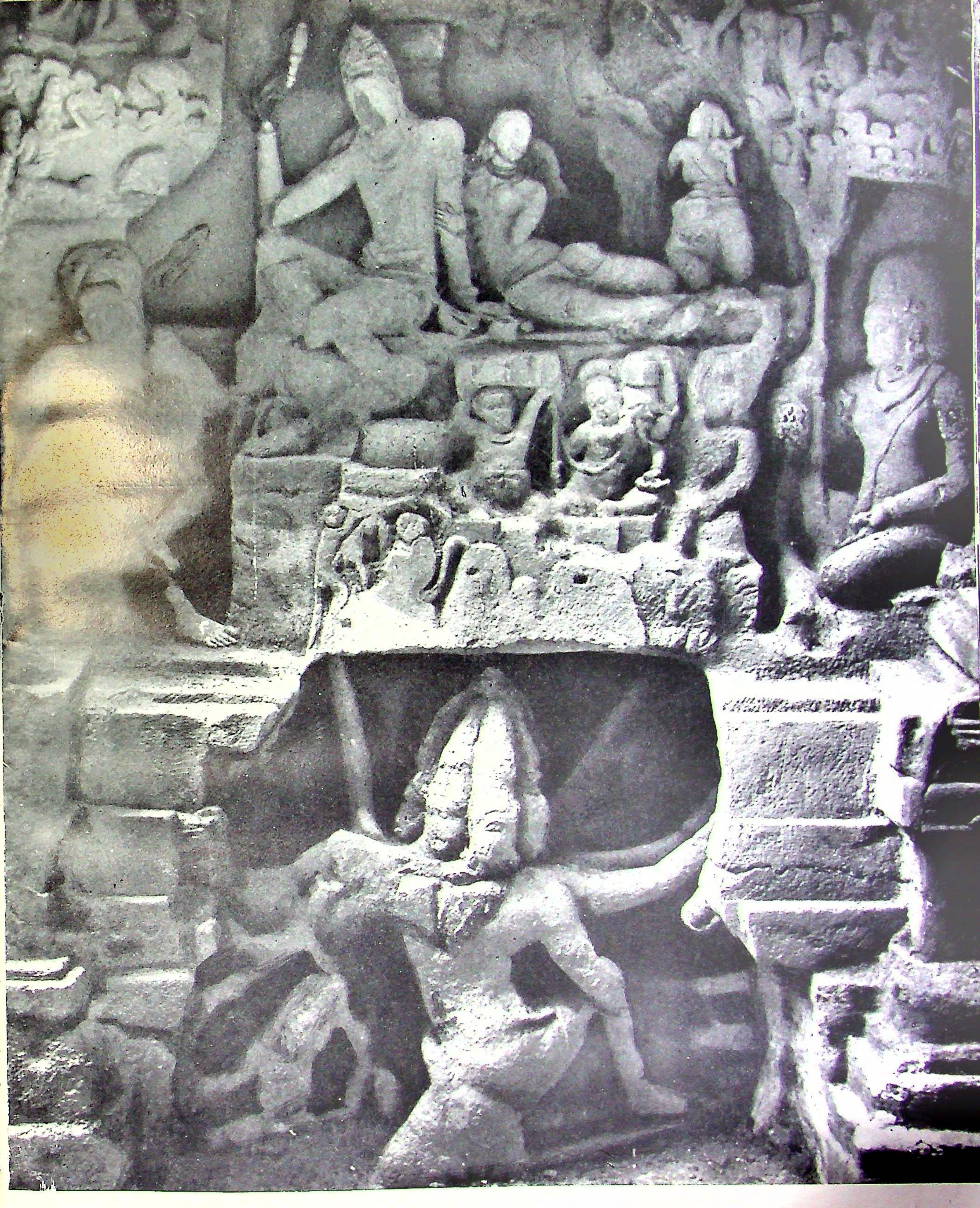
The impressive facade of the Ramesvara Cave owes its effect to its powerful pillars, adorned with bracket figures of dryads and goddesses.



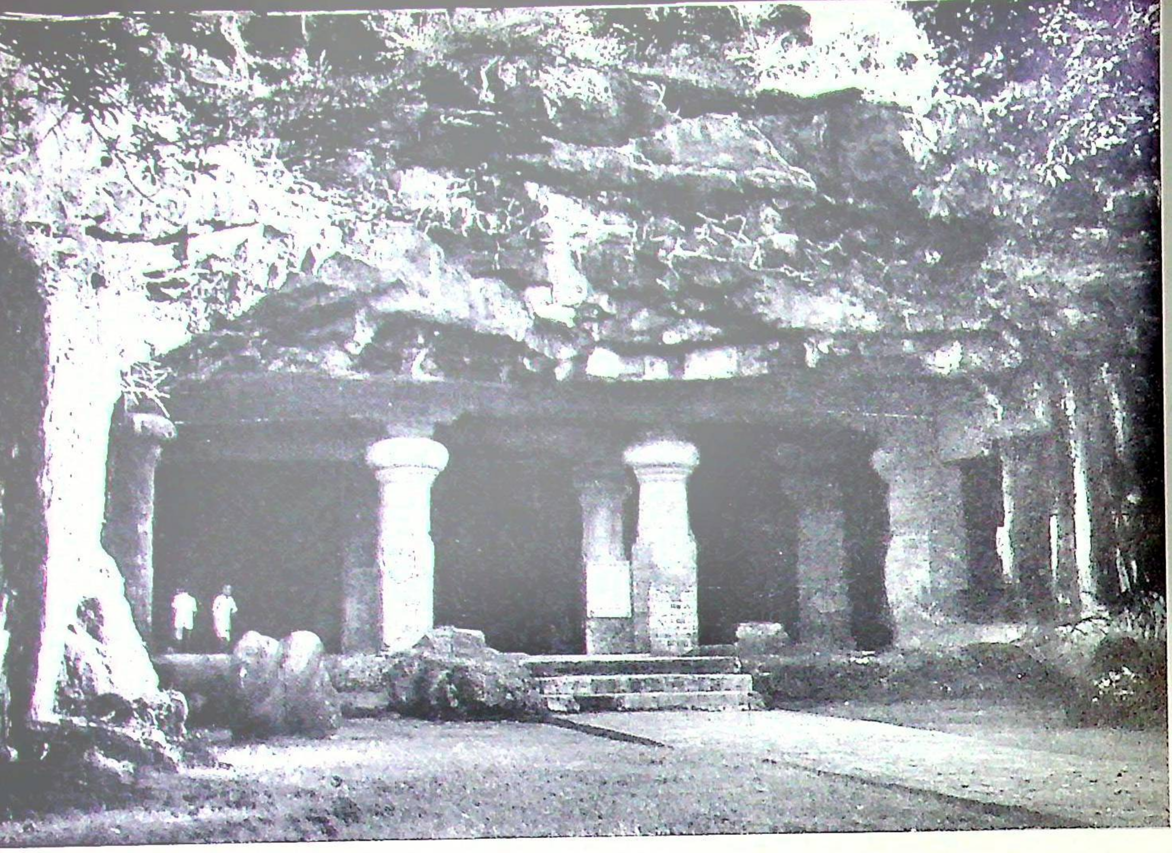
The Dhumar Lena Cave has a striking resemblance to the Elephanta Caves, off Bombay. Its entrance is guarded by ferocious-looking lions.



A breath-taking achievement of stone-cutters is Ellora's Kailasa Temple (8th century). It is the replica of a fully evolved Dravidian temple complete with the main shrine, towering 95 feet, the entrance gate, a Nandi pavilion and a cloistered courtyard.

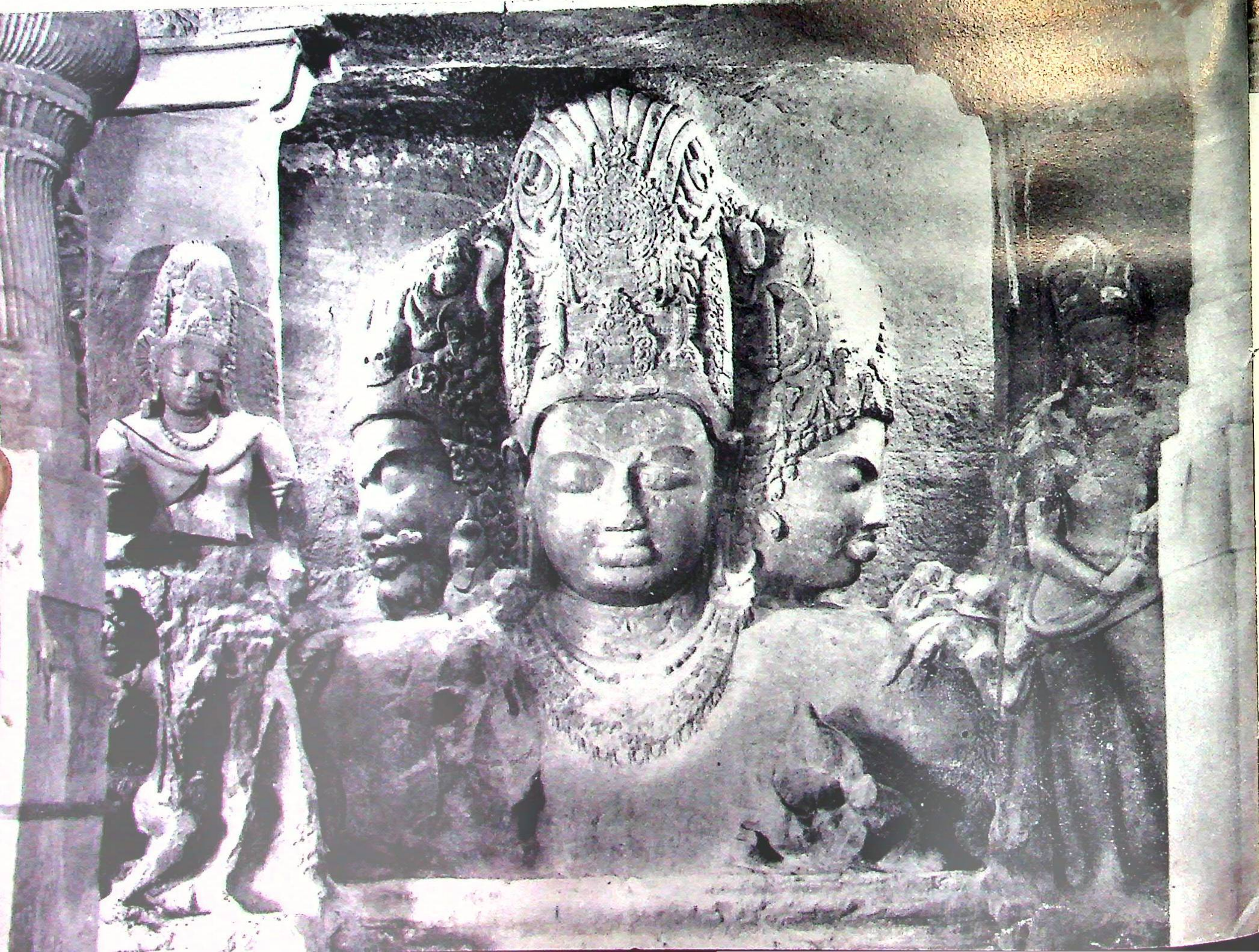


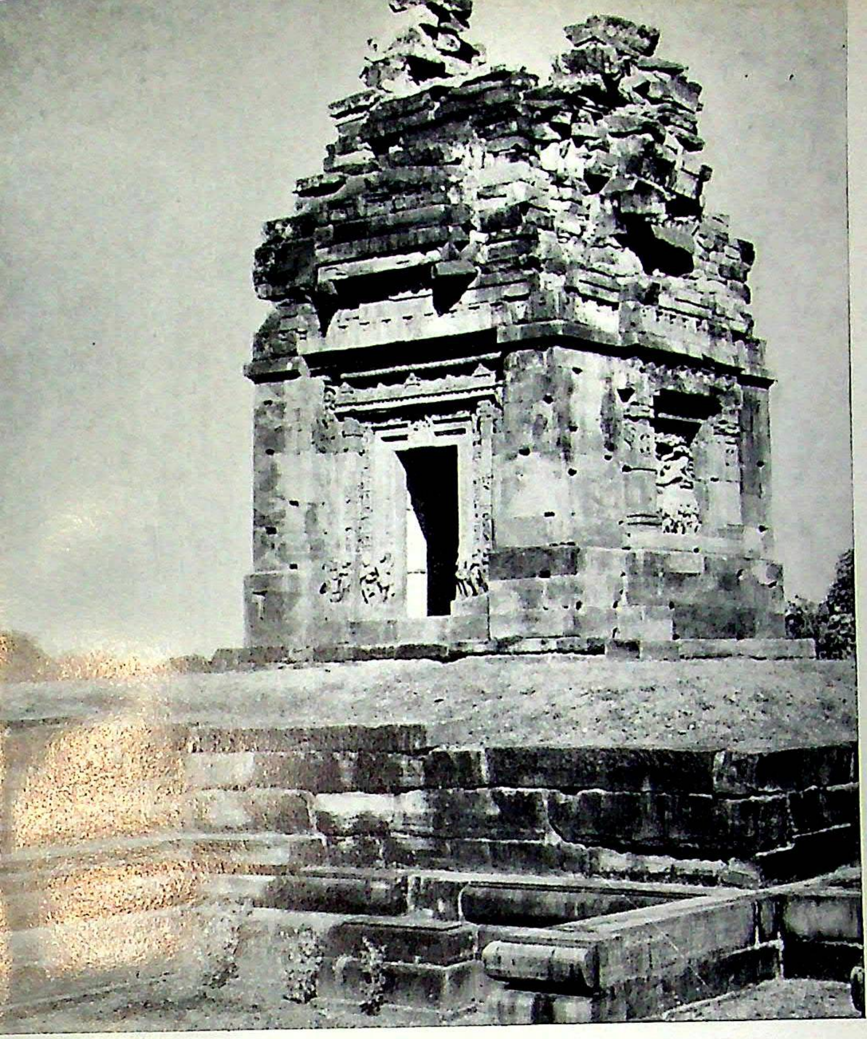
The Kailasa Temple is no less remarkable for its sculptures. Here is a powerful depiction of the mythological story in which the ten-headed Ravana shook Mount Kailas, the abode of Siva.



The cave on the Elephanta Island, off Bombay, is the latest phase of rock-cut architecture (9th century).

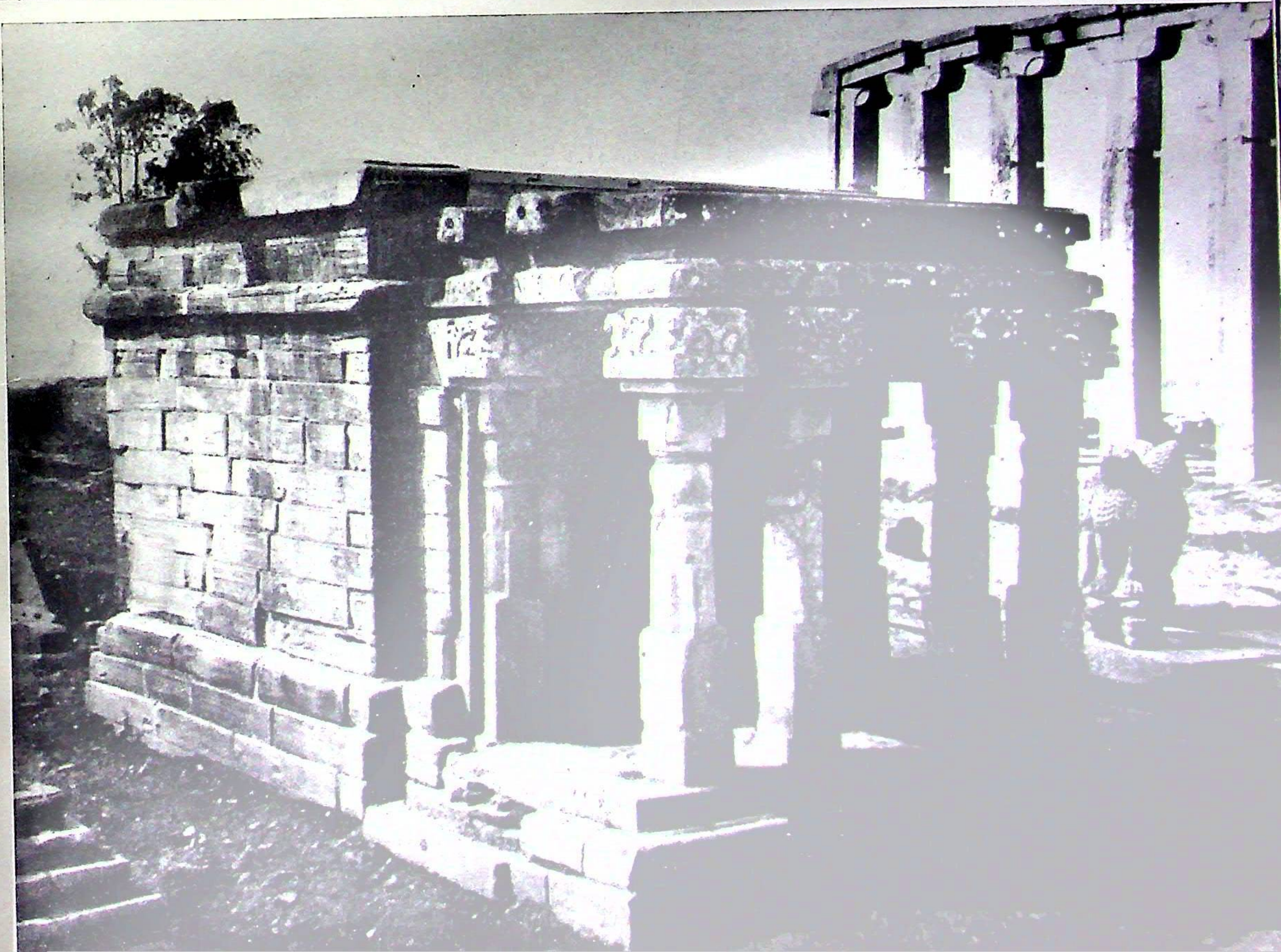
Its large panels of sculptures depicting episodes in Siva's life are remarkable for their forceful presentation. The most famous of them is this relief of Siva in his manifestation as the Trinity—Creator, Preserver and Destroyer.





This temple at Deograh (Uttar Pradesh) with its small, and as yet unevolved tower is a rare fifth century example of temple architecture in North India.

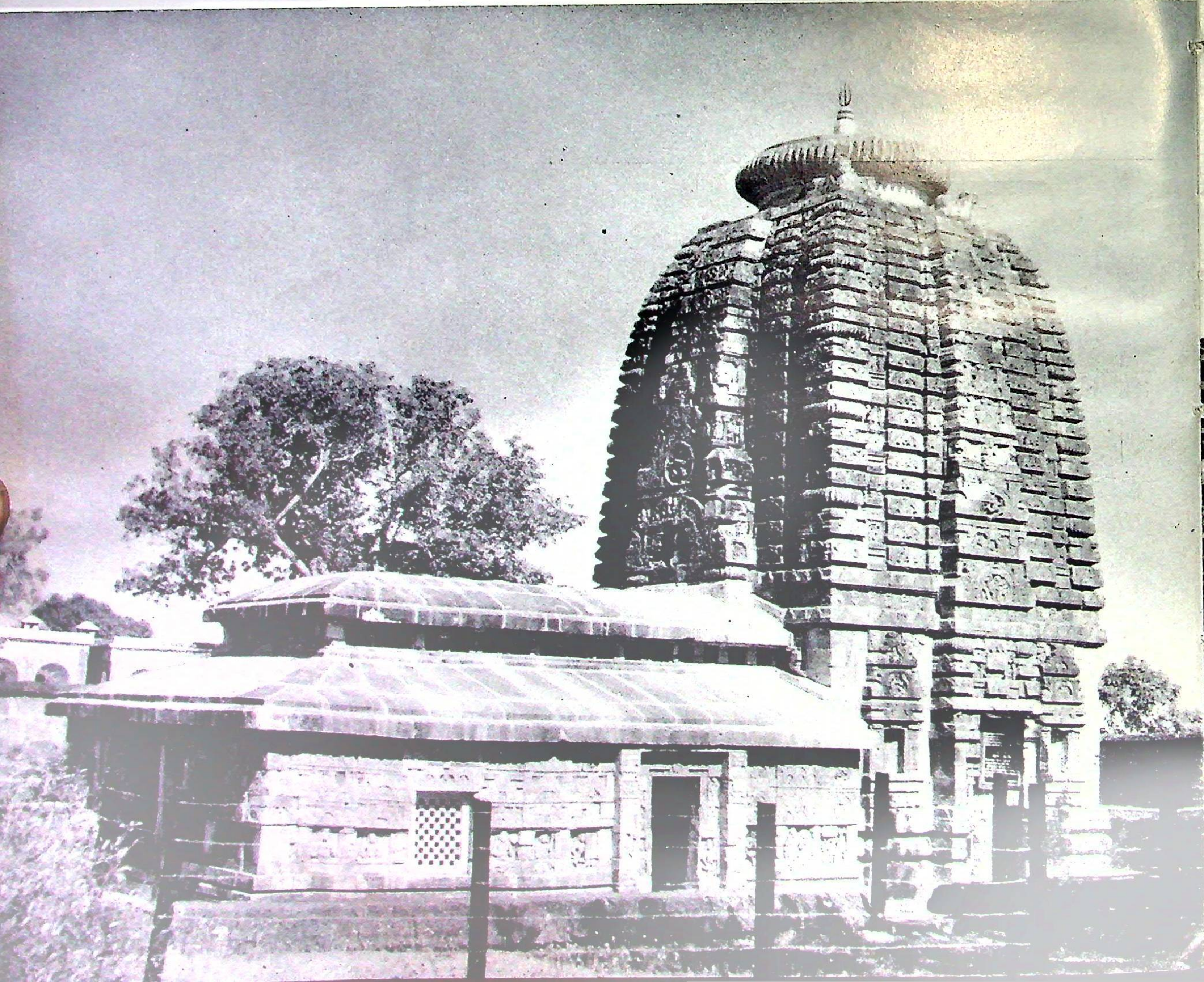
Within the easy reach of most tourists is this elegant, flat-roofed Gupta temple (5th century) at Sanchi.

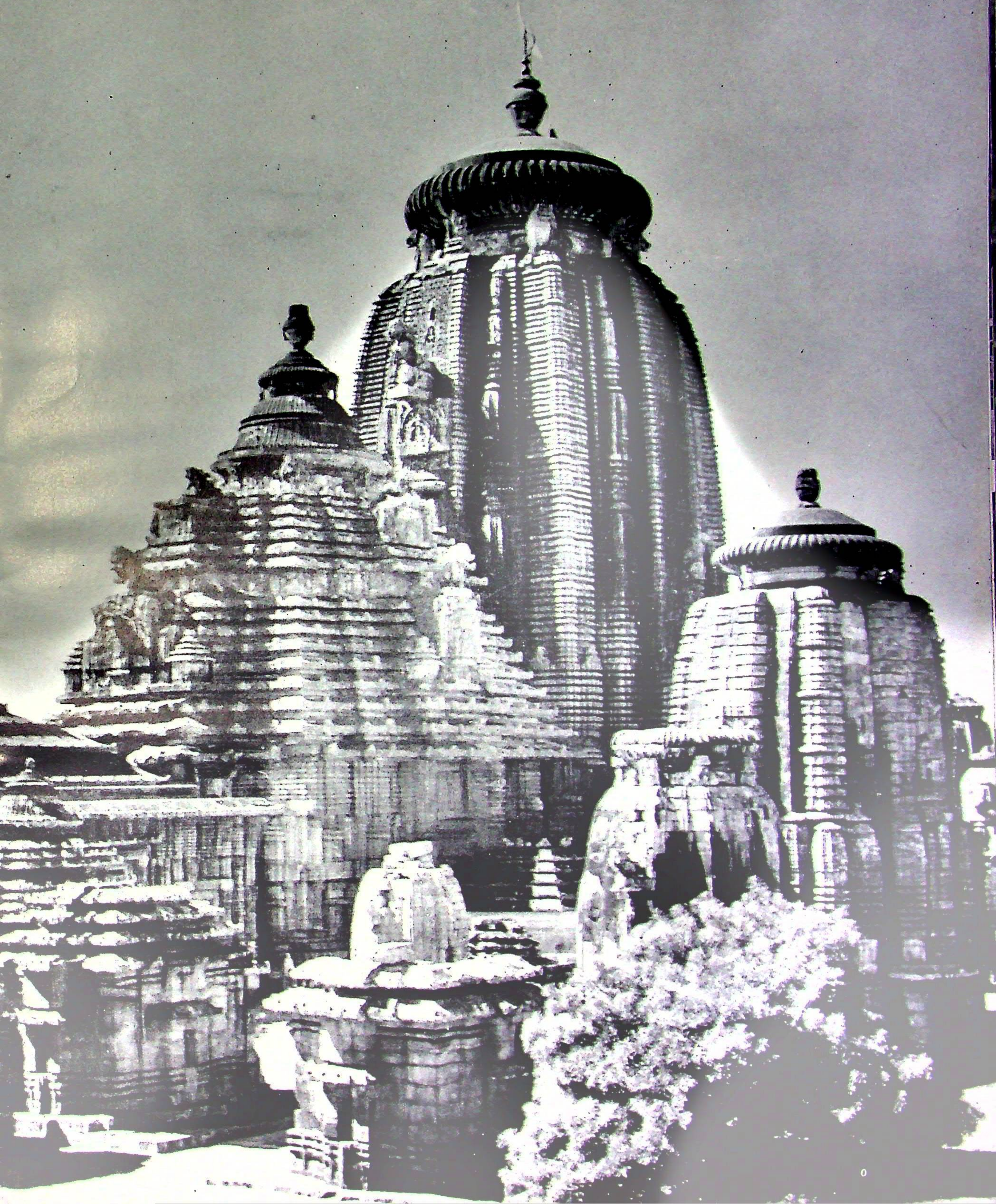


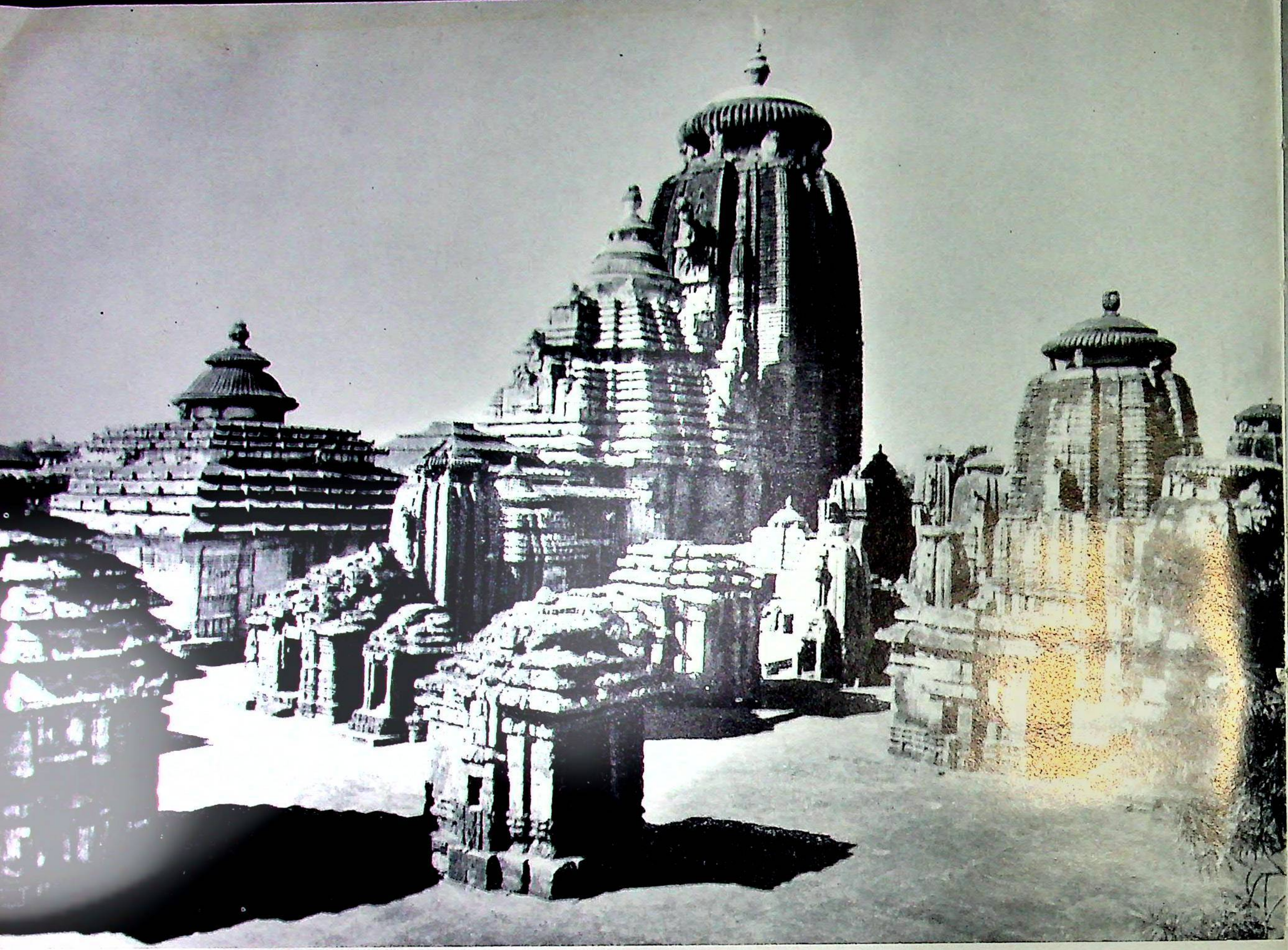
Eastern India

(opp. page)—The Lingaraja Temple, acclaimed the finest at Bhubaneswar, dominates the landscape with its 127-foot high tower.

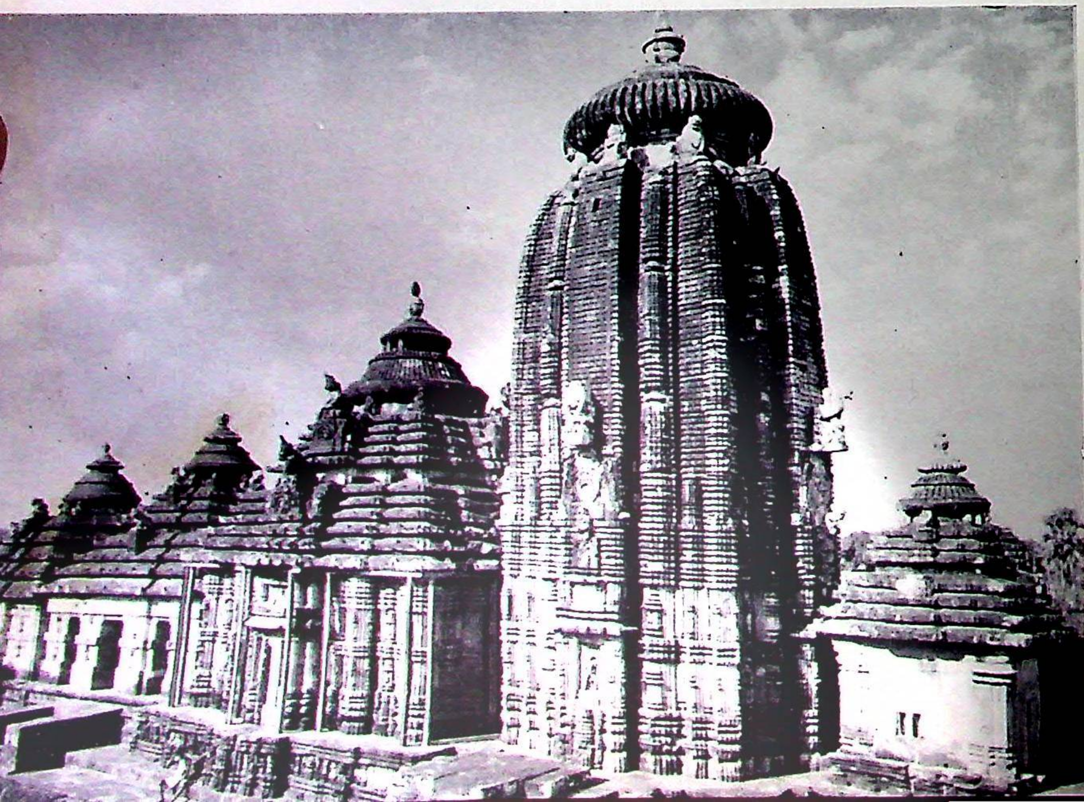
Among the best preserved early Orissan examples is this Parasurameswar Temple at Bhubaneswar. It is a small structure with a towered sanctum and a flat-roofed pillared hall.



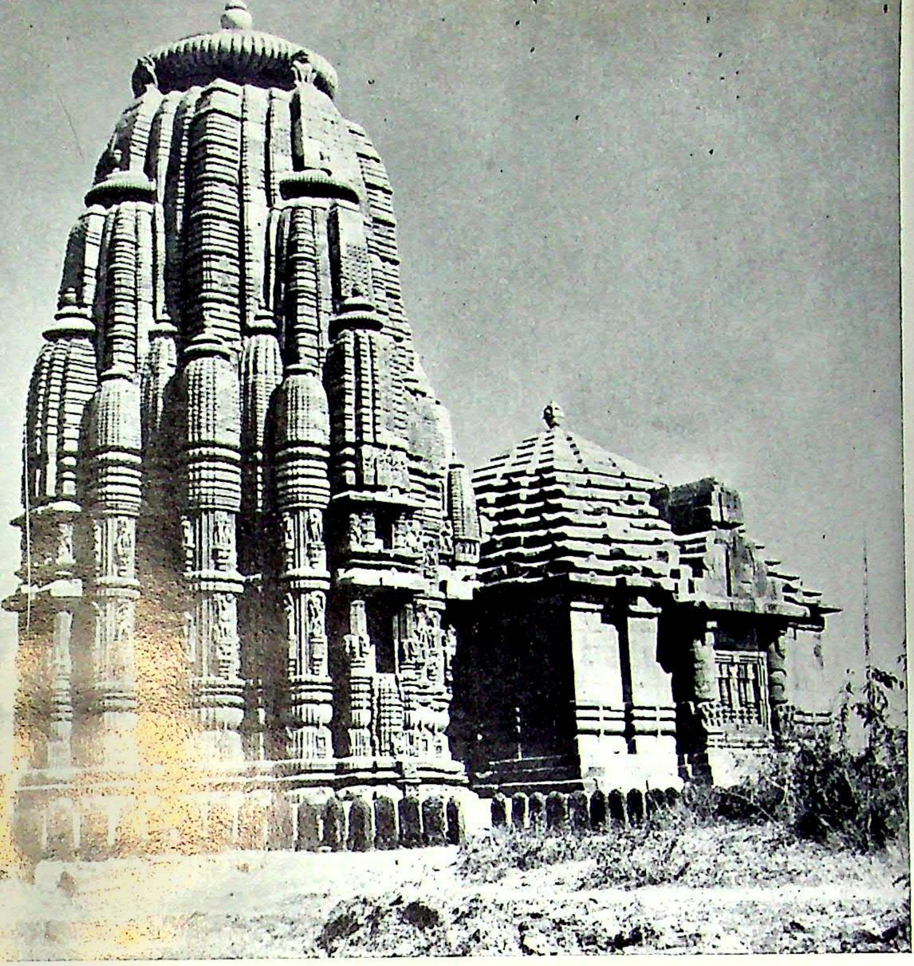




The Lingaraja Temple stands amidst a cluster of smaller shrines in a spacious compound and consists of the towered sanctum, the audience, dance and refectory halls.

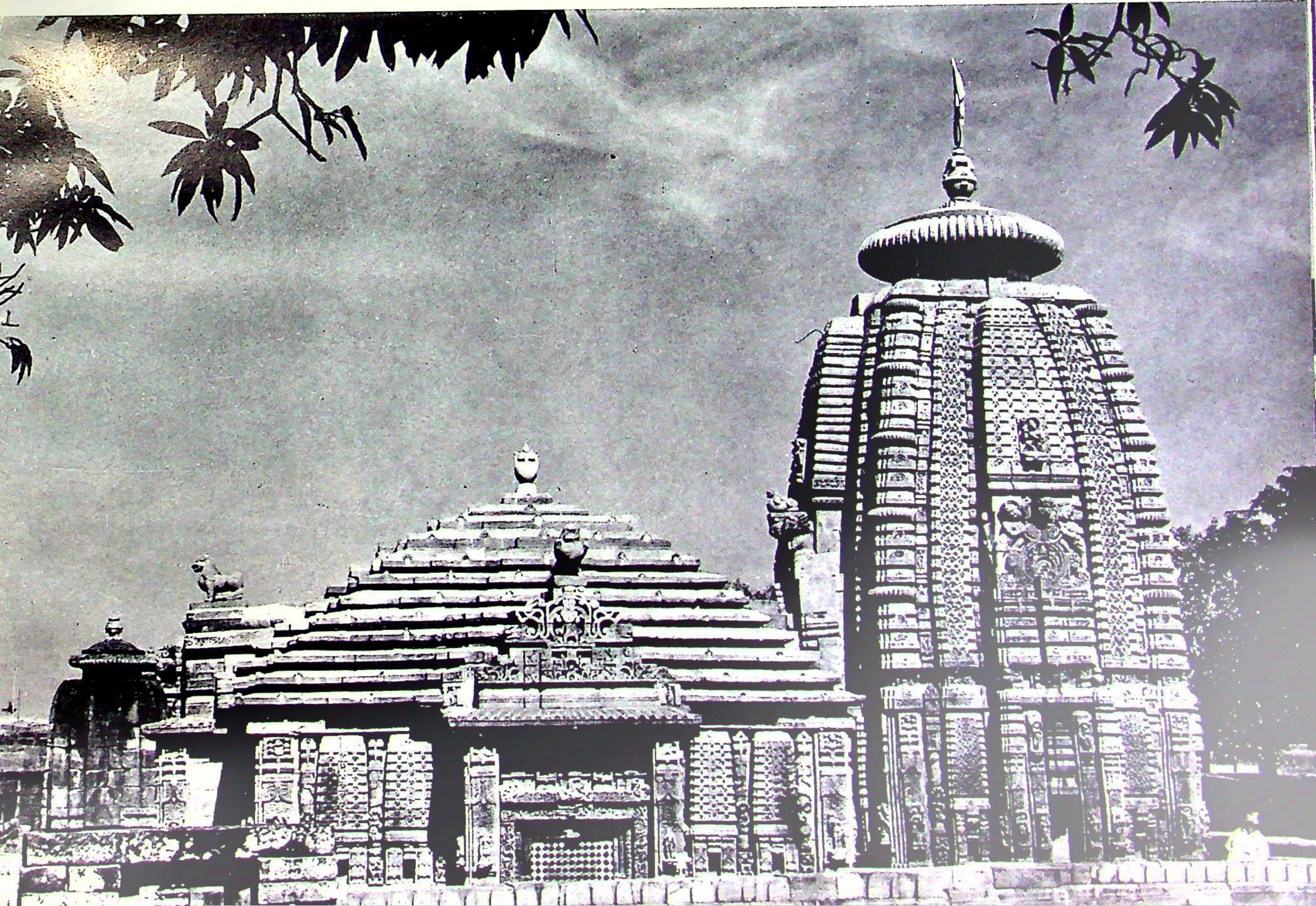


Among the many notable temples at Bhubaneswar besides the Lingaraja is this temple dedicated to Ananta-Basudeva, a form of Vishnu.

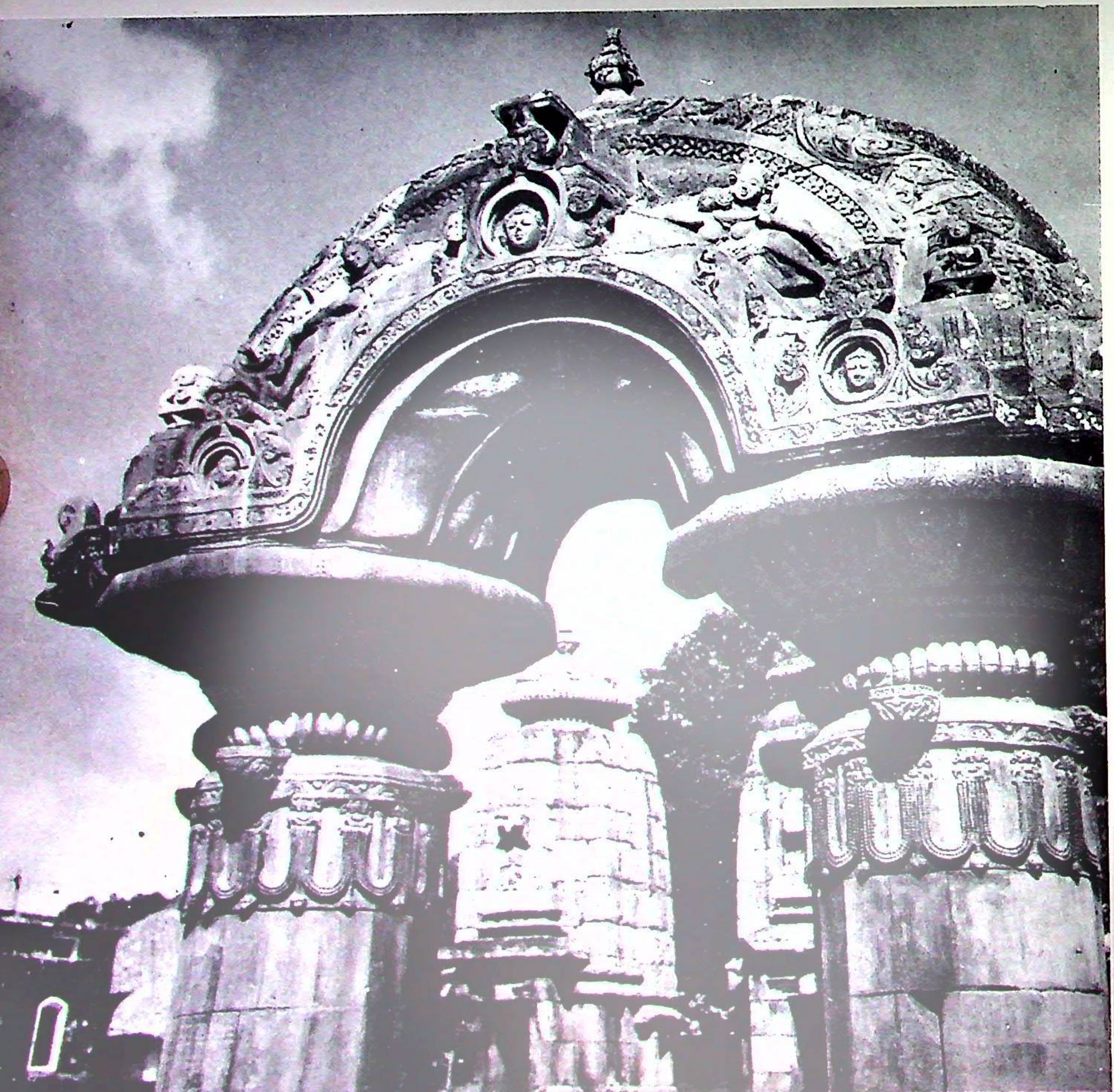


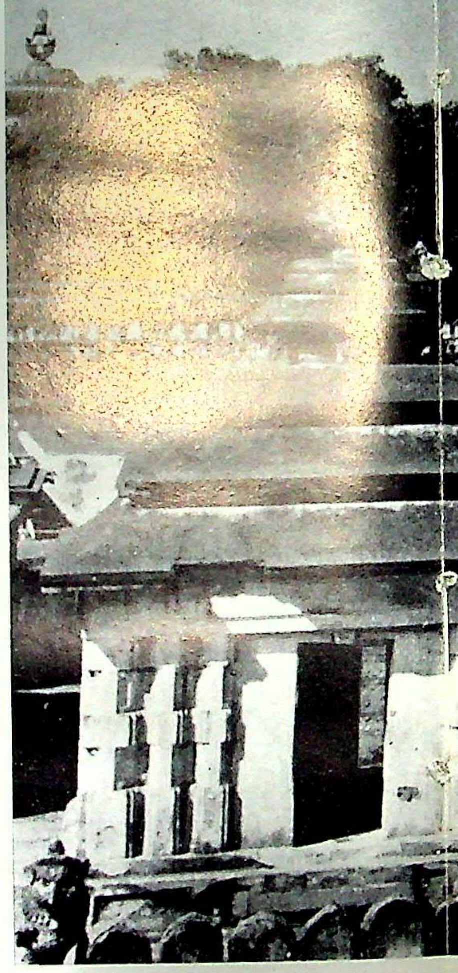
The Rajrani Temple at Bhubaneswar is an example of later Orissan architecture (12th century). It bears a strong kinship with the Central Indian style as exemplified at Khajuraho in Central India.

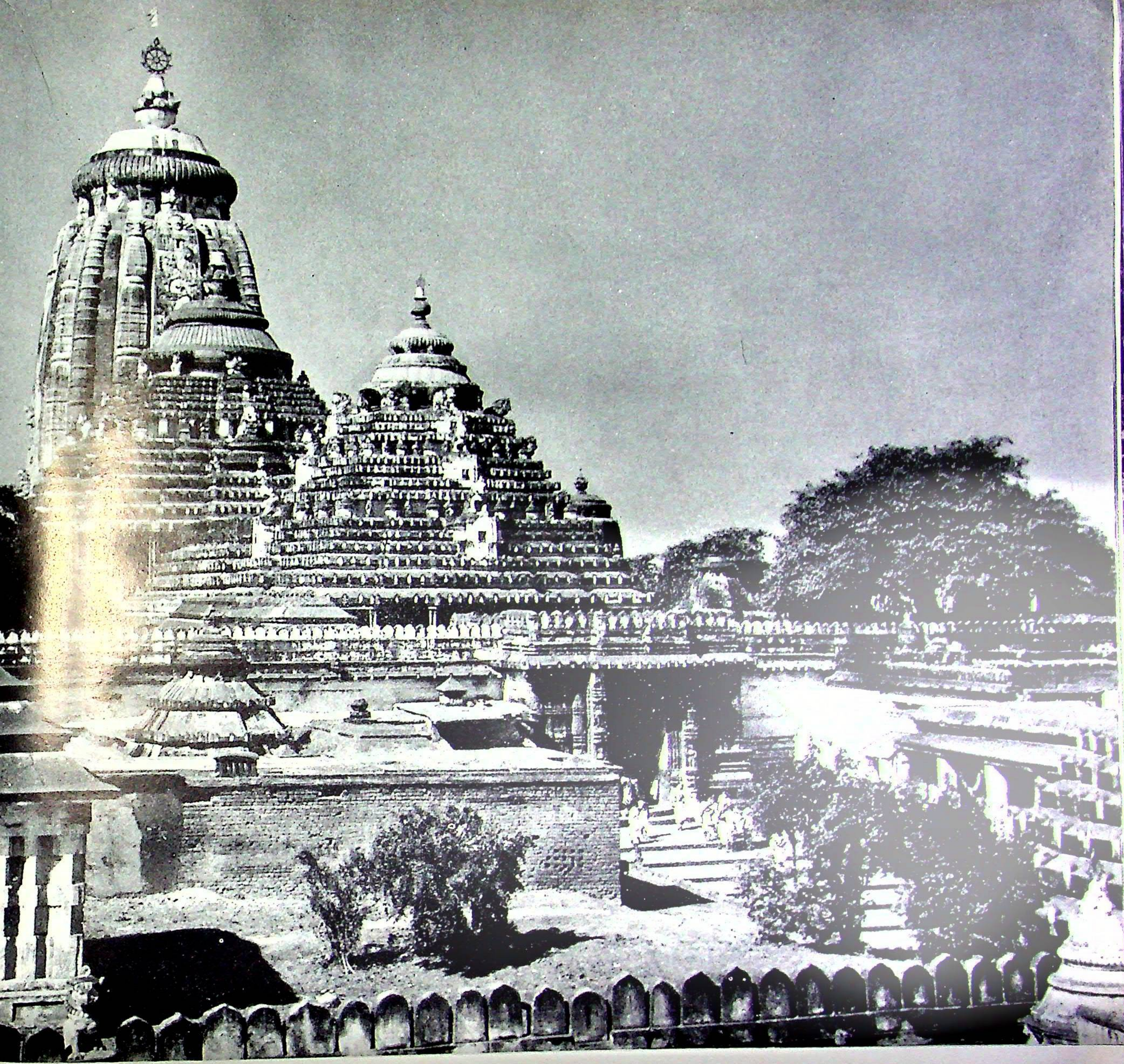
Small but highly elegant is this temple of Mukteswar, built about 975 A. D. It has graceful proportions and a beautiful finish.



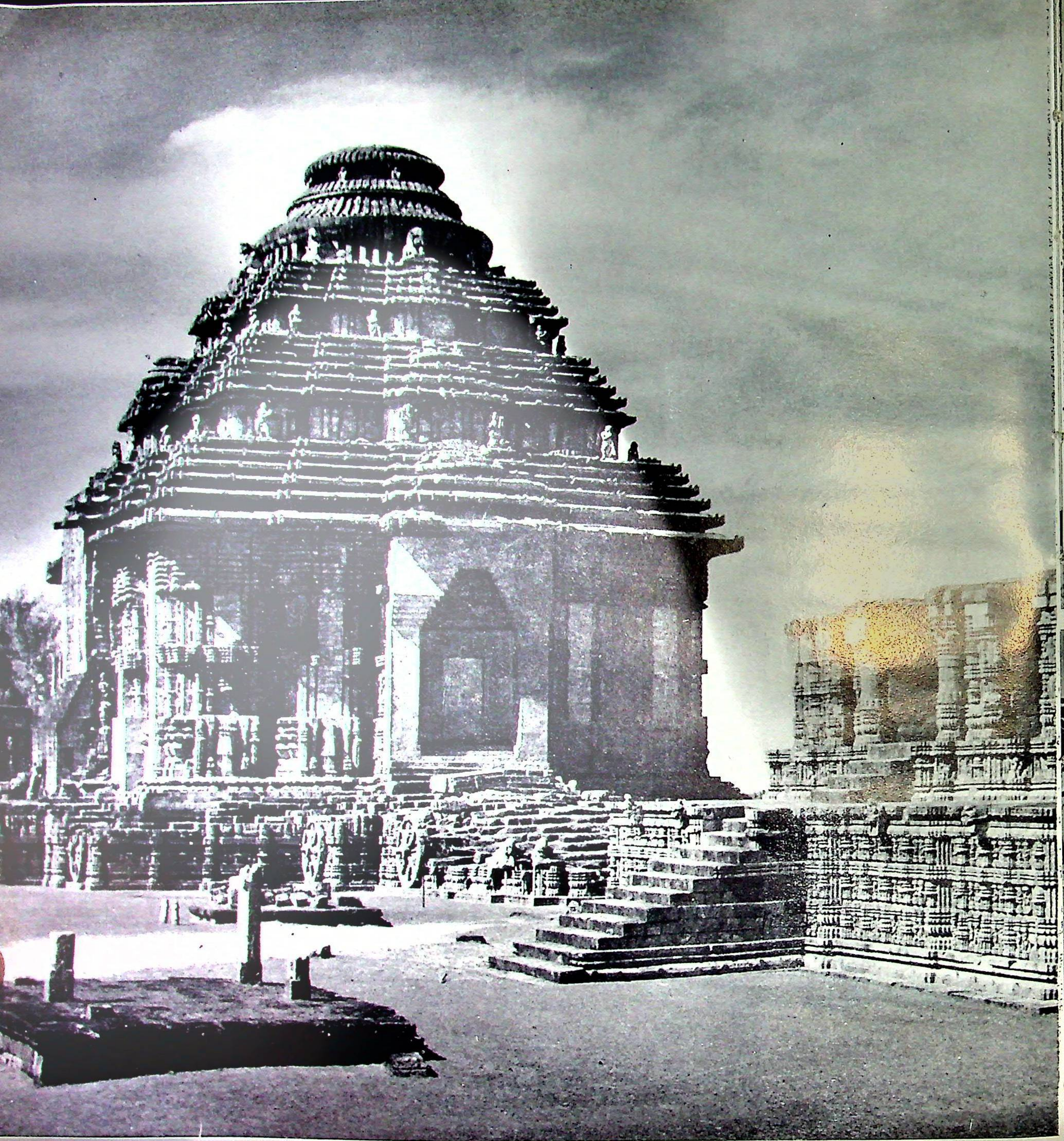
The arched gateway or *torana* of the Mukteswar Temple is well proportioned and skilfully carved.



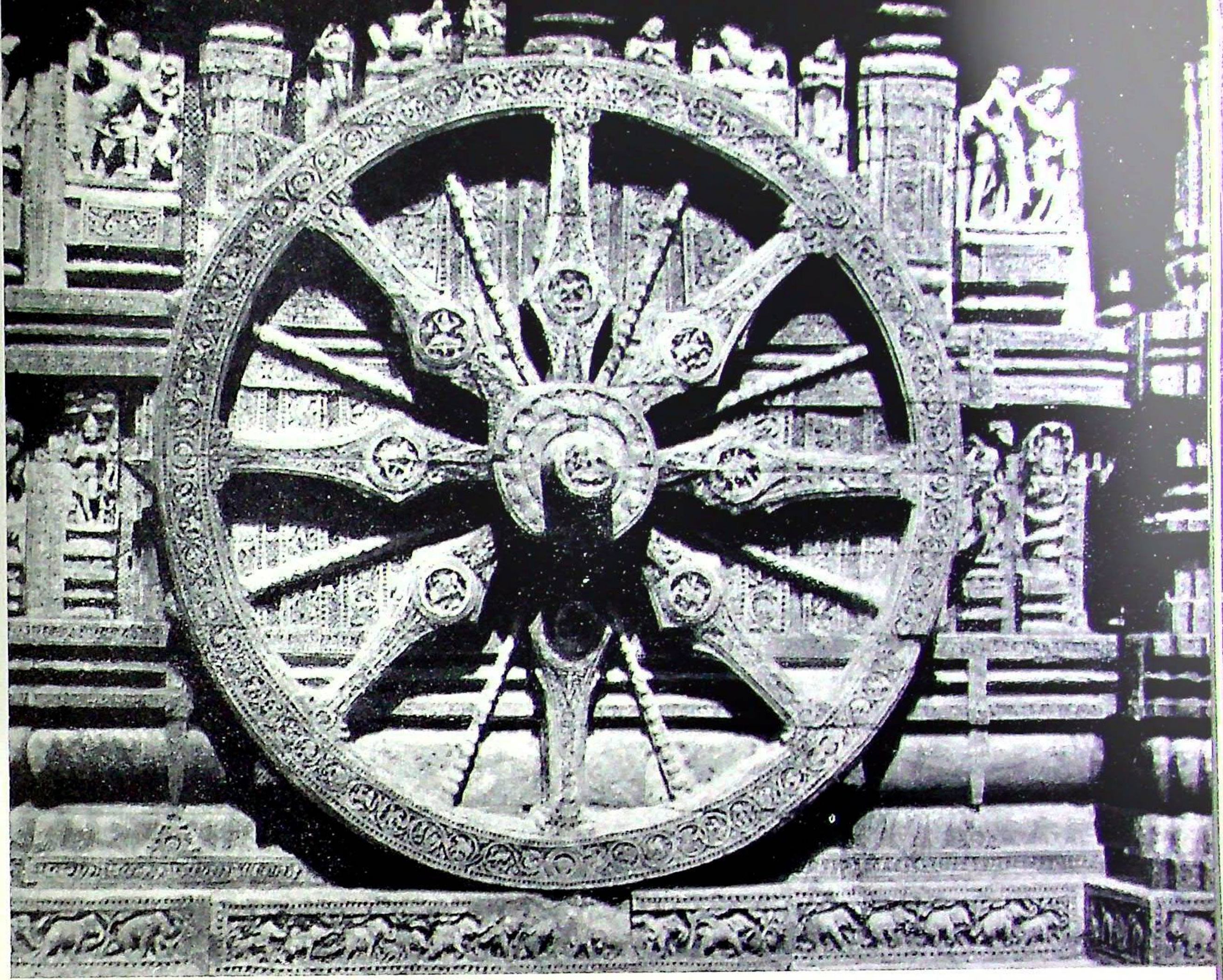




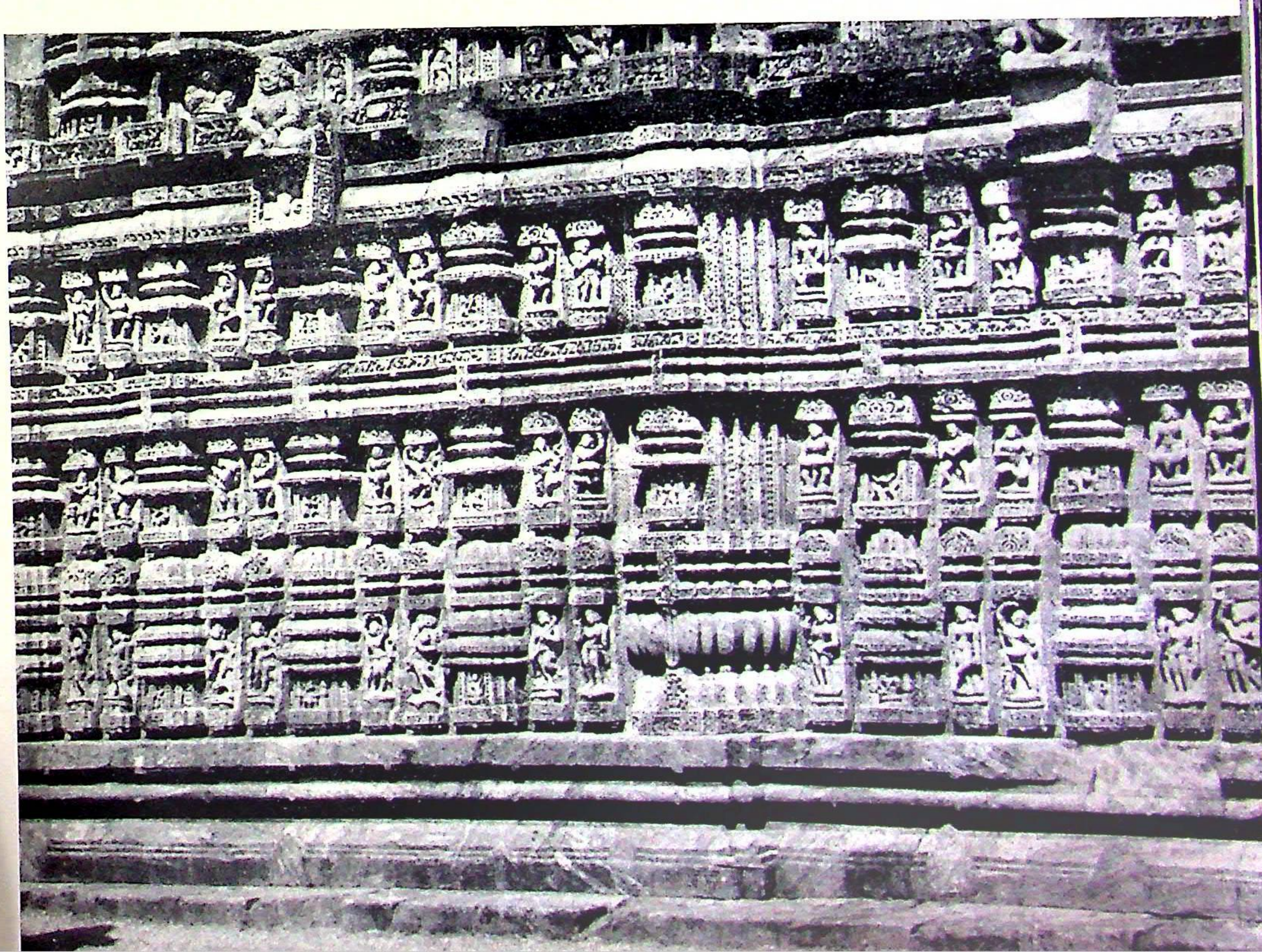
The Jagannath Temple at Puri (famous for its annual car festival) is a complex of four structures. It is another well-known example of the Orissan style.

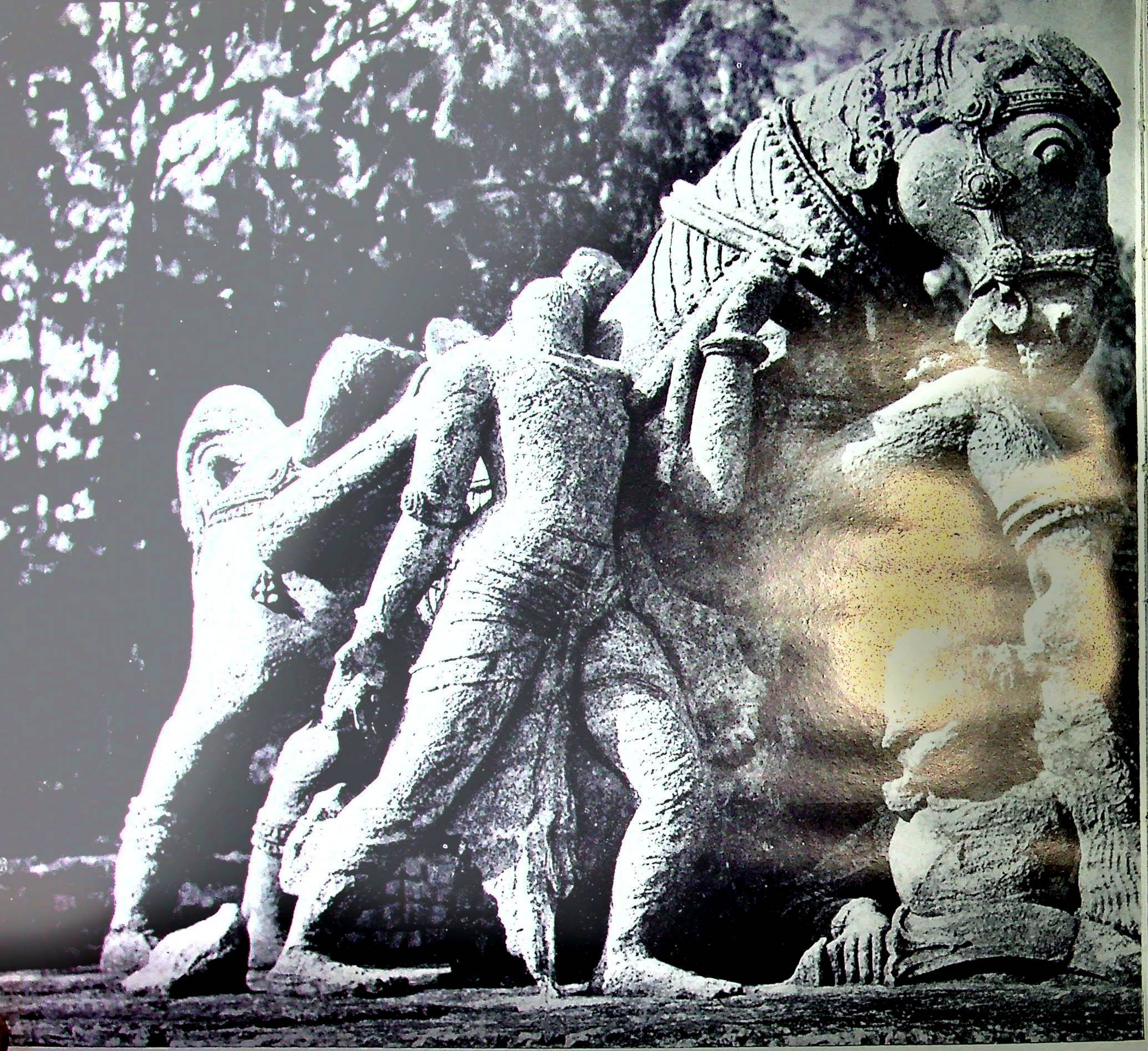


The supreme achievement of the Orissan builder is this colossal Sun Temple at Konarak. Designed to look like the mythical carriage of the Sun-god—complete with wheels and horses—this temple had a 225-ft. high tower, an unbeaten record for Indian temples. The immense surfaces of the plinth and outer walls of the temple are embellished with niches and figure-sculptures.

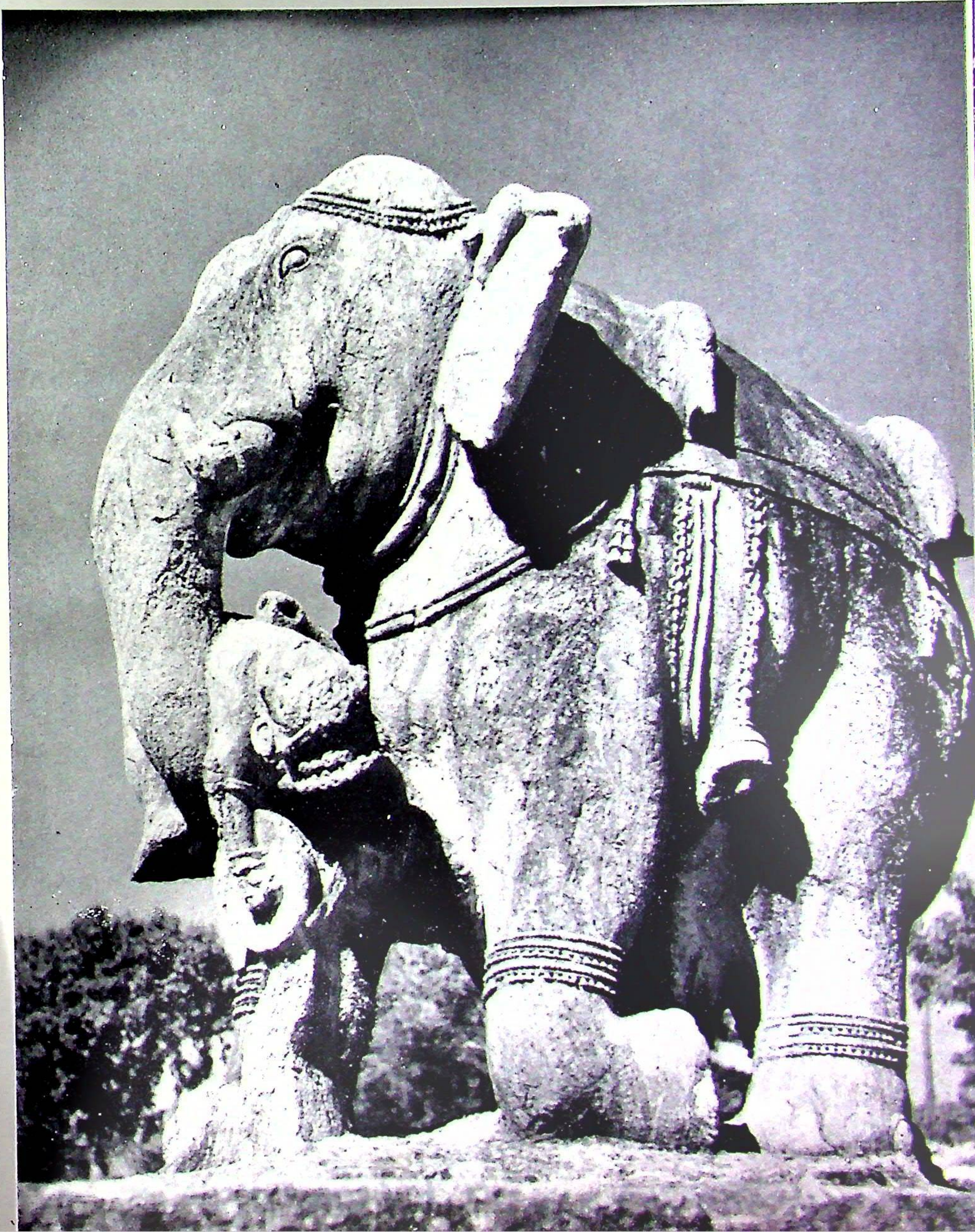


(Above) A wheel from the Sun-god's chariot, and (below) profusely sculptured wall from the Sun Temple.

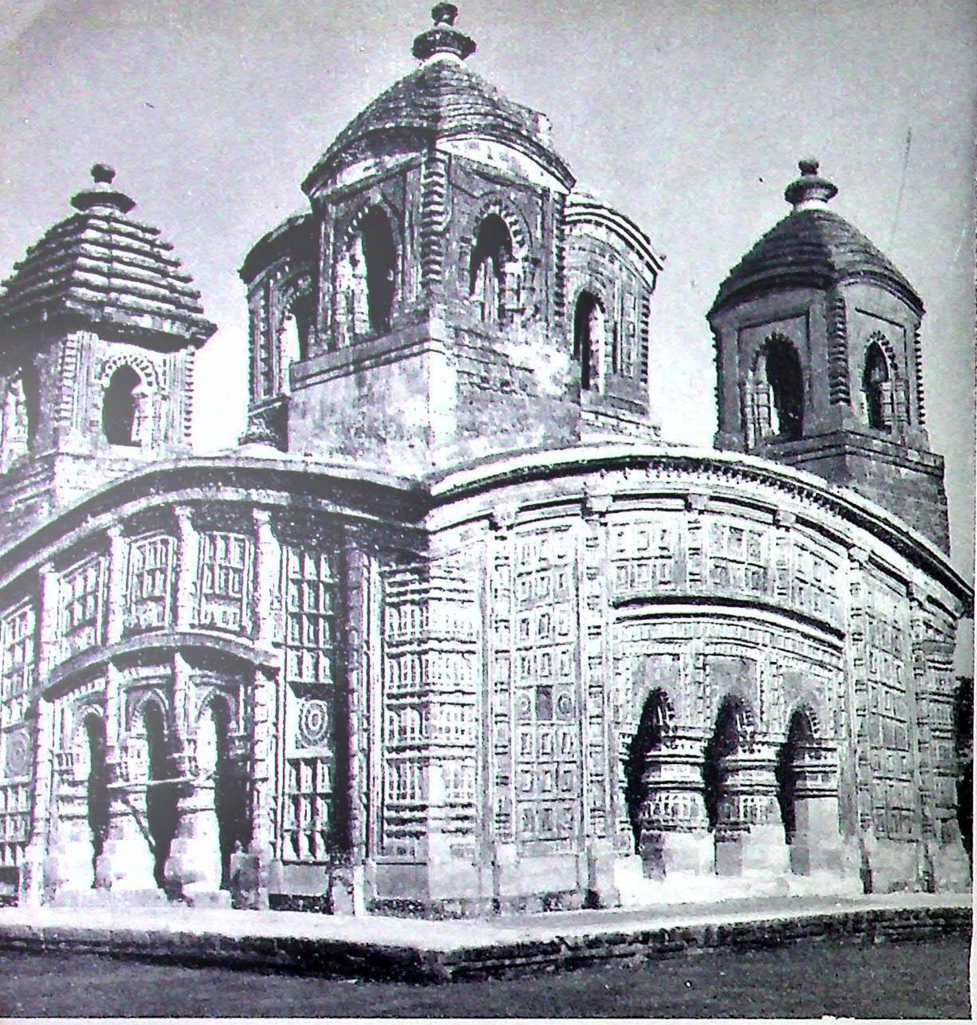




Huge, free-standing sculptures of a war horse and a war elephant, standing in the desolate courtyard of the Sun Temple, are remarkable for their vigorous execution.

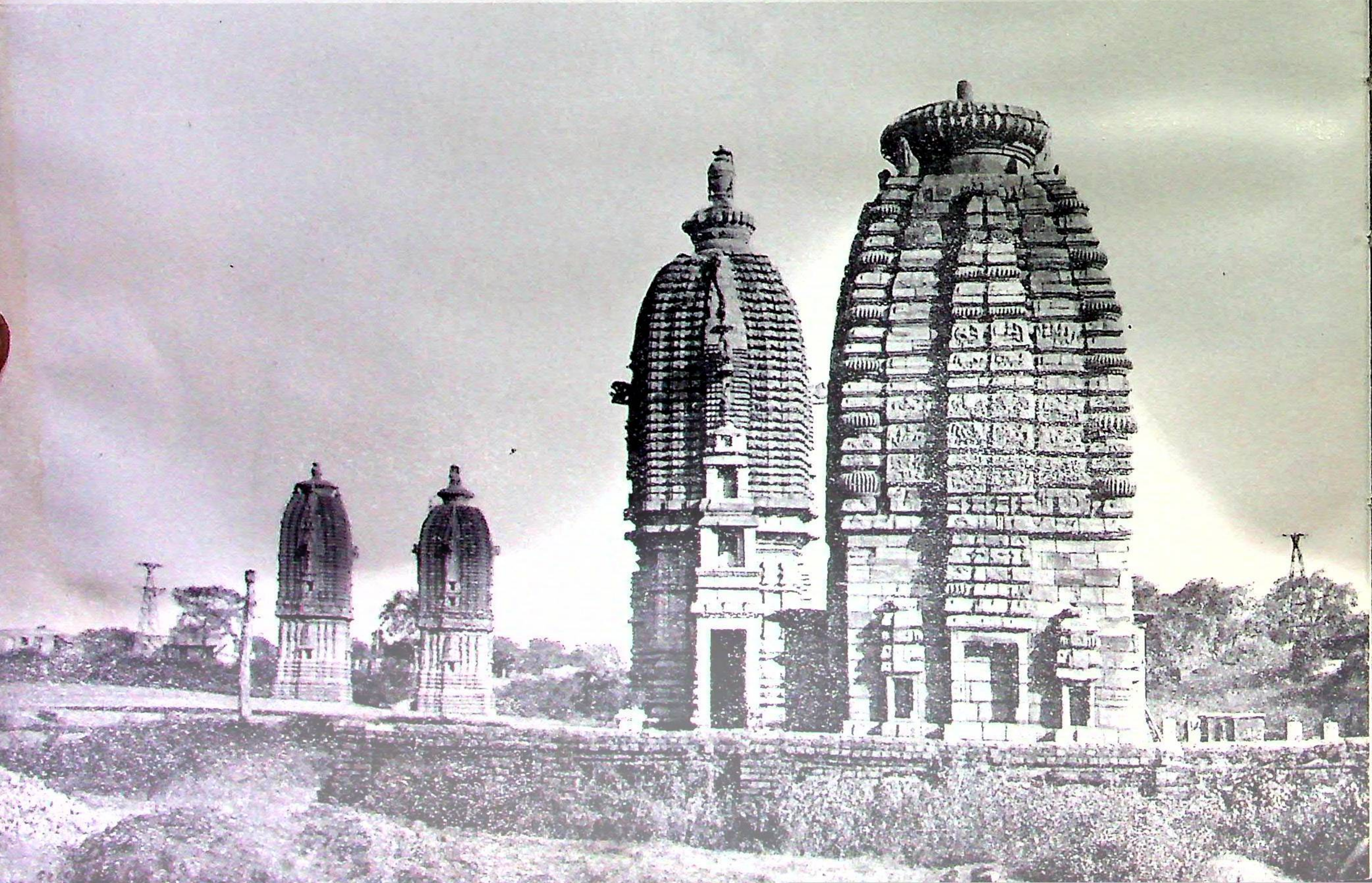


(opp. page)—Built at the spot where the Buddha attained enlightenment, the Bodh Gaya Temple has an imposing pyramidal tower, 180 feet high.



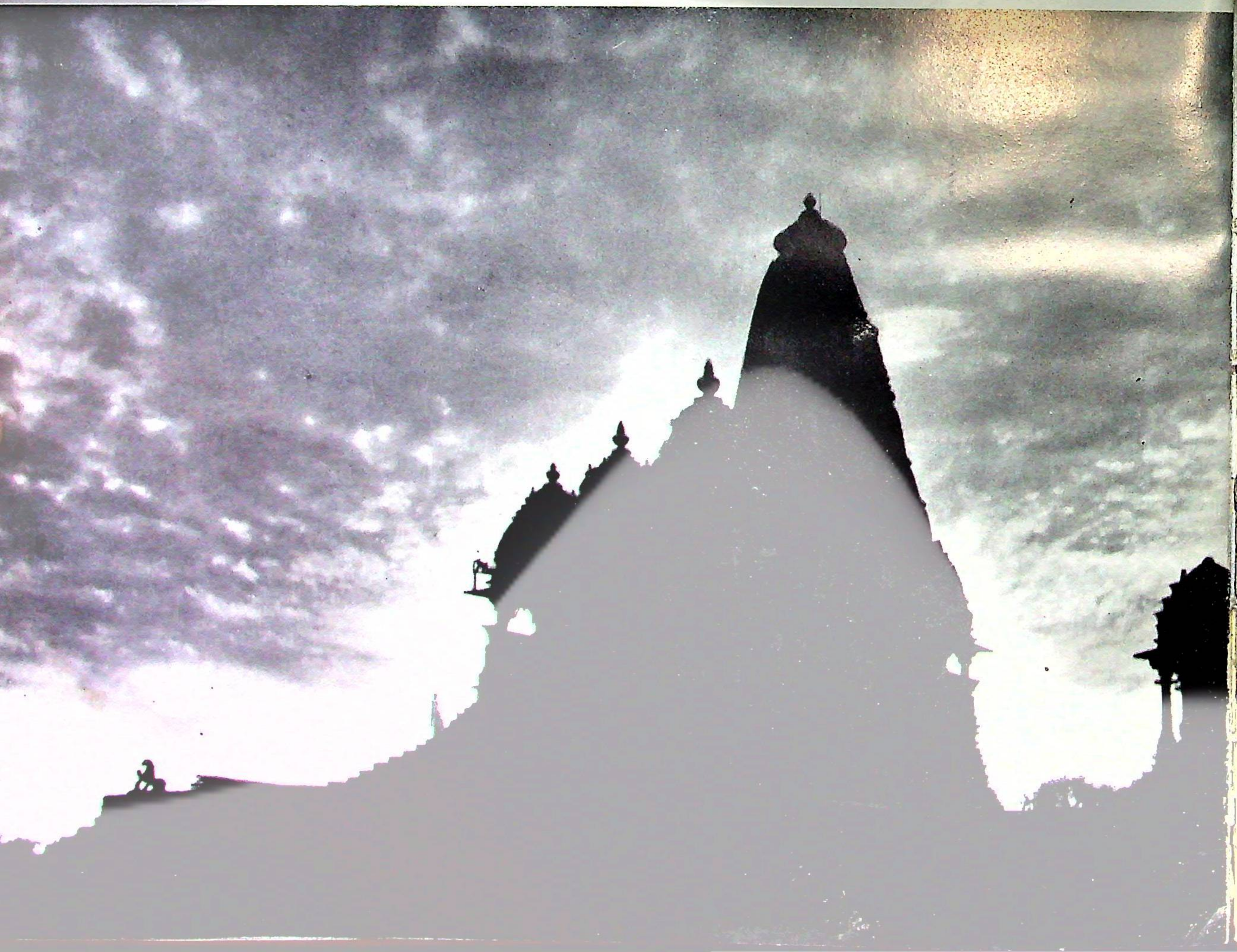
Temple architecture in southern Bengal took on a folk complexion and resembled the thatched bamboo hut. They have curved cornices and eaves, and their brick surfaces are decorated with terracotta reliefs. Alongside is the Jor-Bangla Temple at Bishnupur.

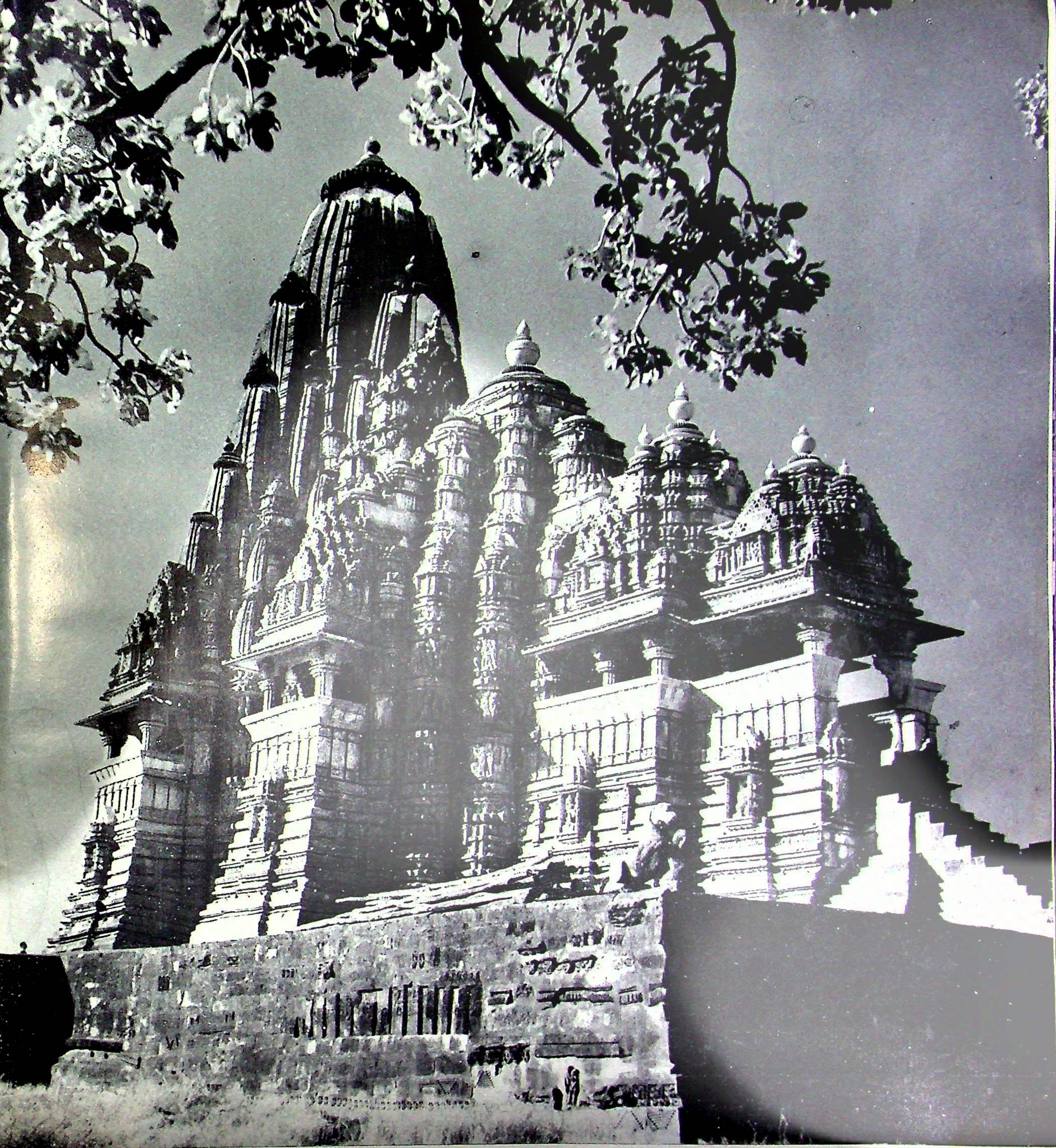
This group of temples found at Barakar in the Burdwan district of West Bengal (10th-11th centuries) was built by the Pala kings.



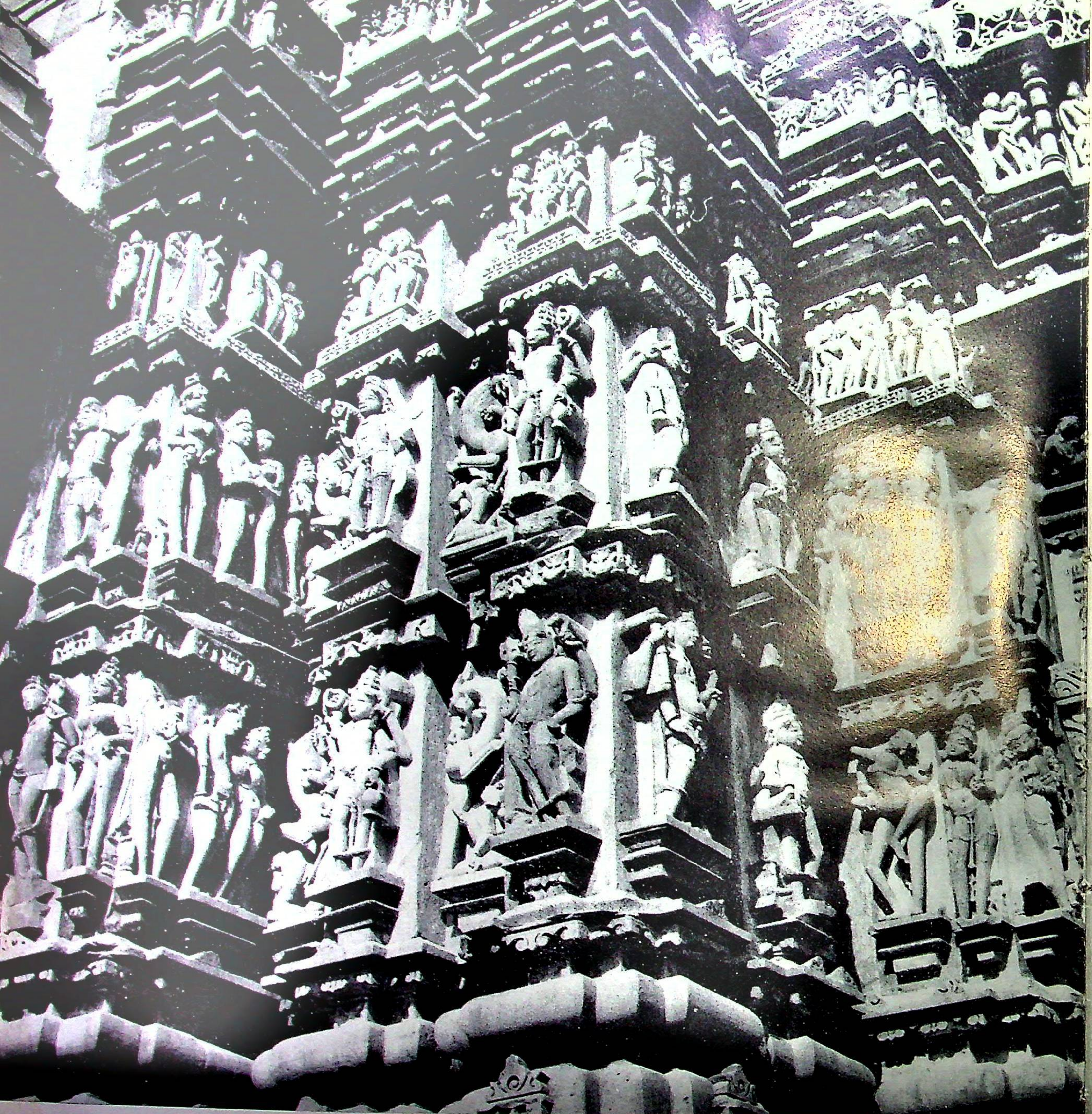
Central India

Much smaller than Orissan temples, those of Khajuraho achieve their architectural effect by a greater unity of conception, graceful proportions and superb surface decoration. The aspiring quality of these temples is emphasized by their high plinths and the grading of the towers that surmount the different parts of the temple.

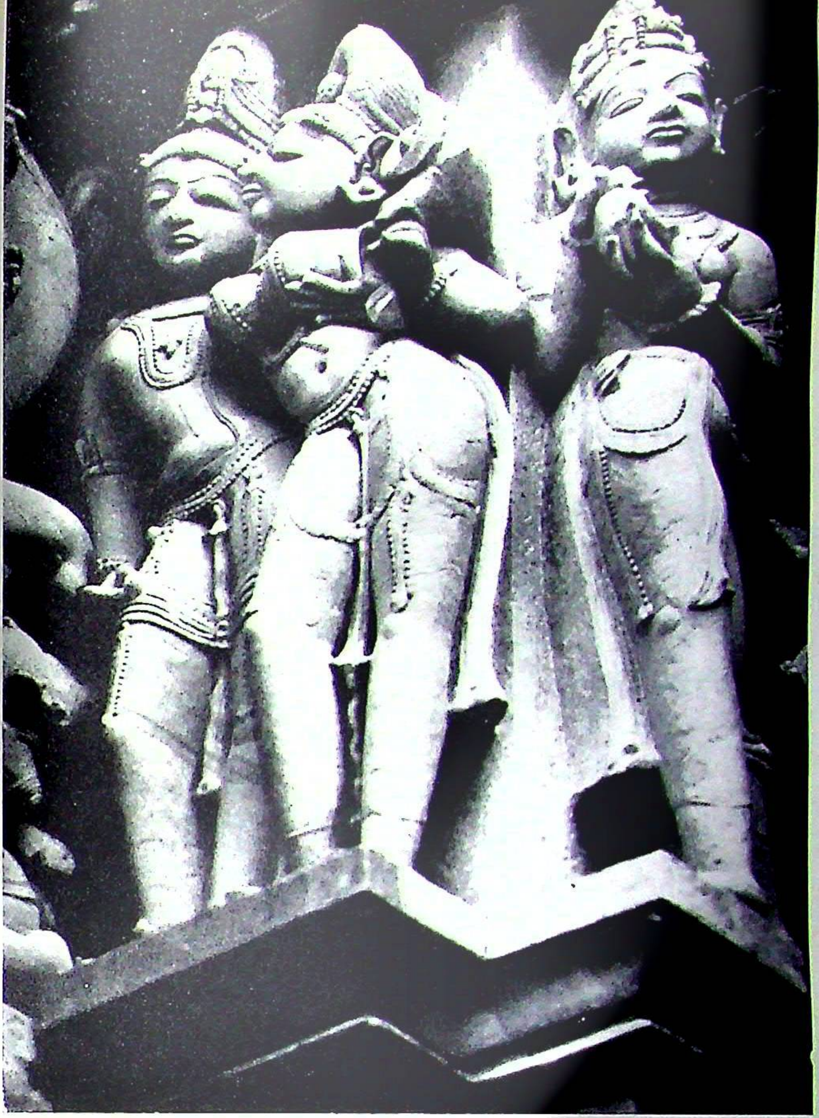




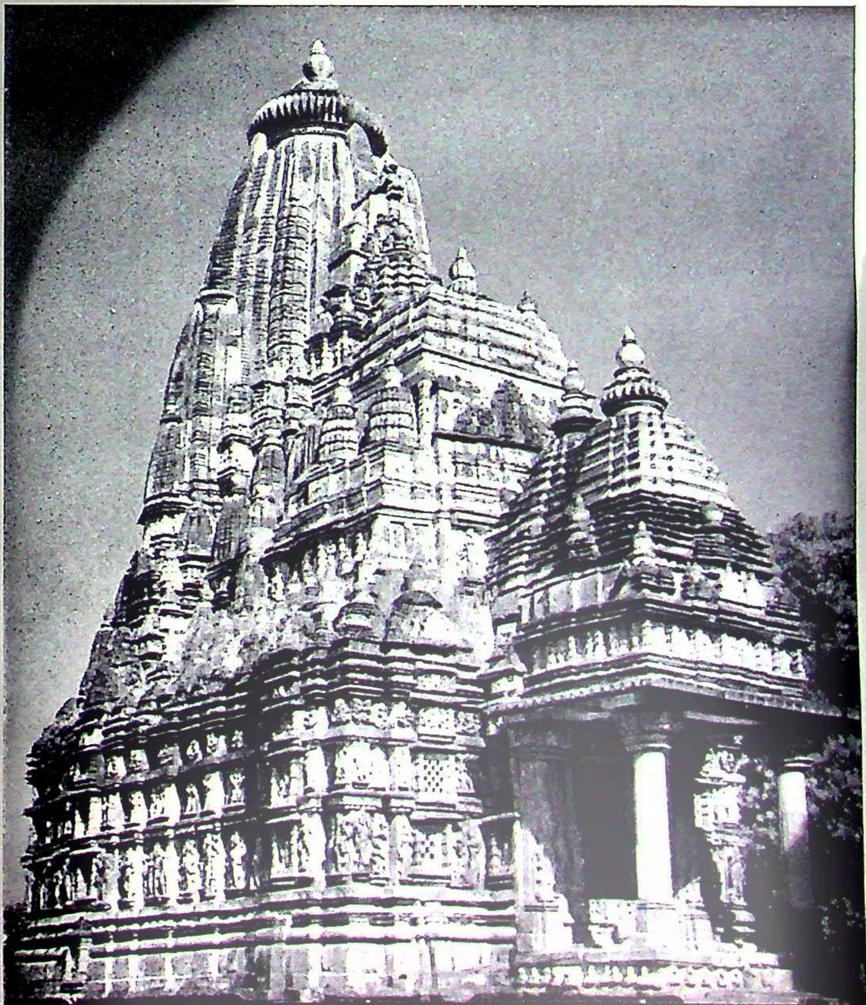
Kandariya Mahadev Temple, Khajuraho



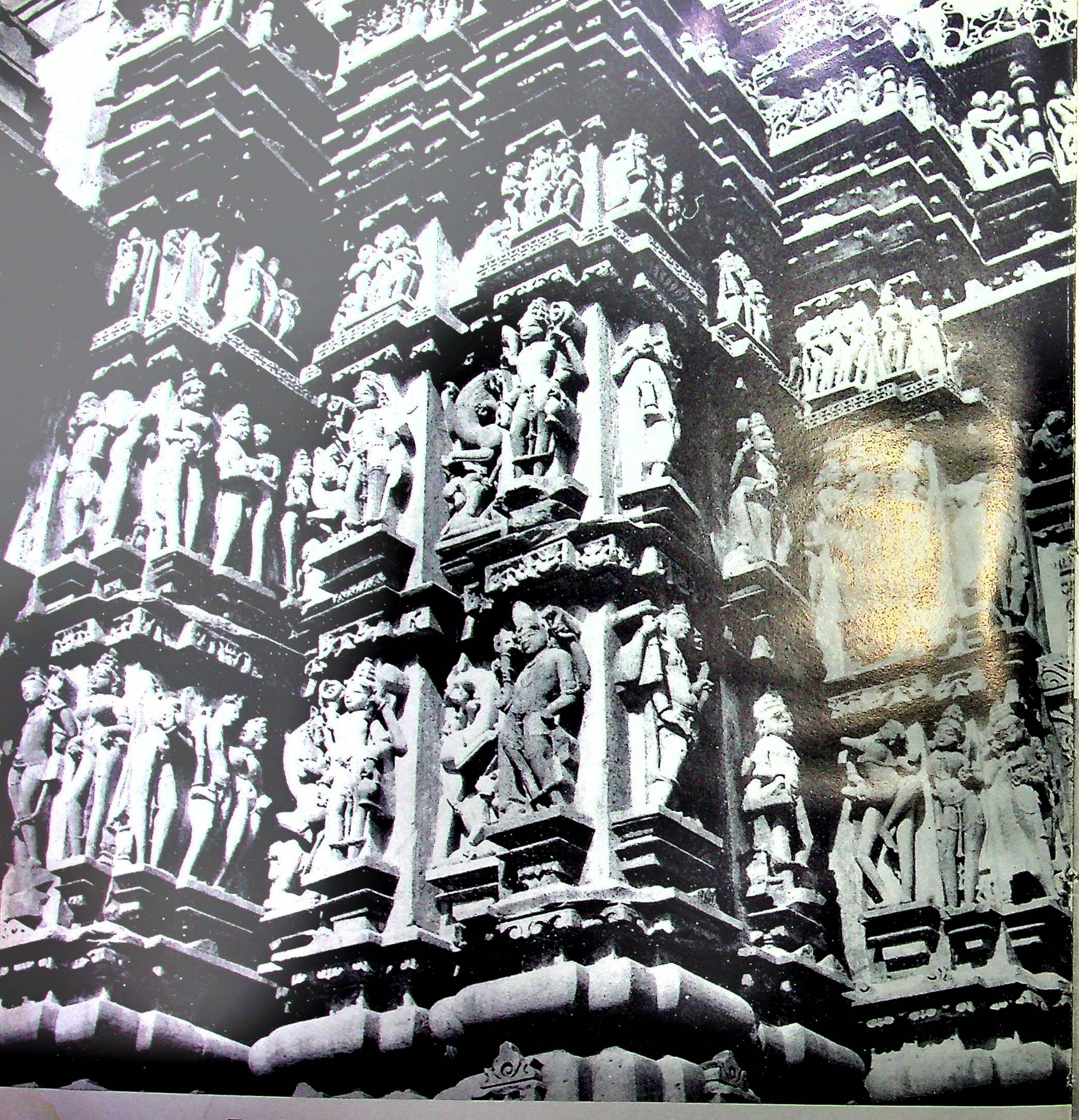
The walls of Khajuraho temples are richly adorned with sculptures. Peculiar to these wall sculptures is the uninhibited emphasis on erotic themes.



A *Mithuna* couple and an attendant. Kandariya Mahadev Temple, Khajuraho.



Of the Jain temples at Khajuraho, this one dedicated to Parshwanath is the biggest. They are noteworthy for the complete absence of window openings.



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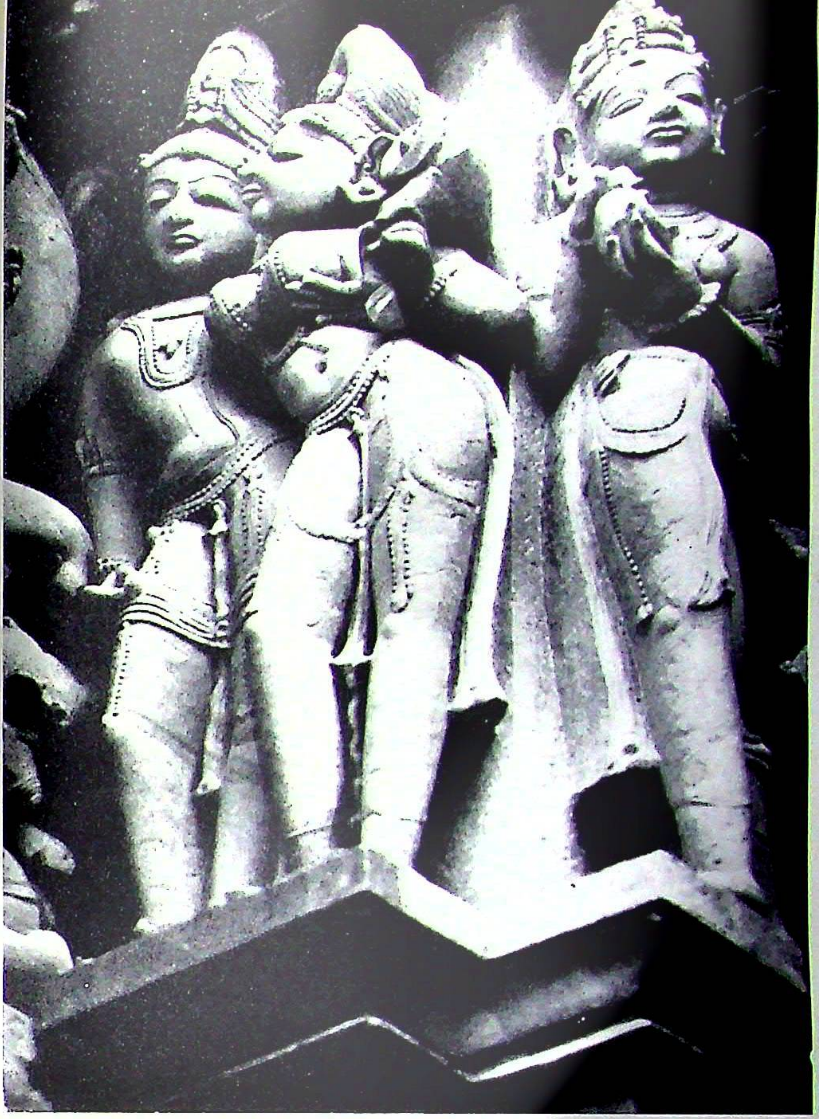
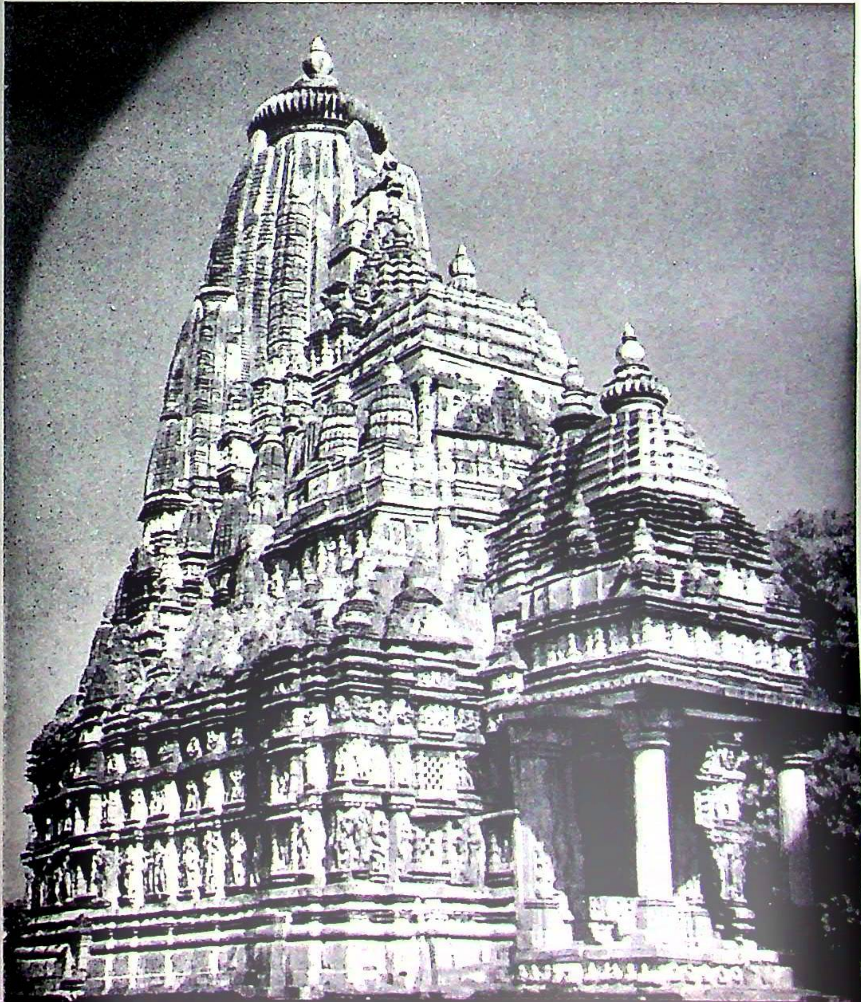


A *Mithuna* couple and an attendant. Kandariya Mahadev Temple, Khajuraho.



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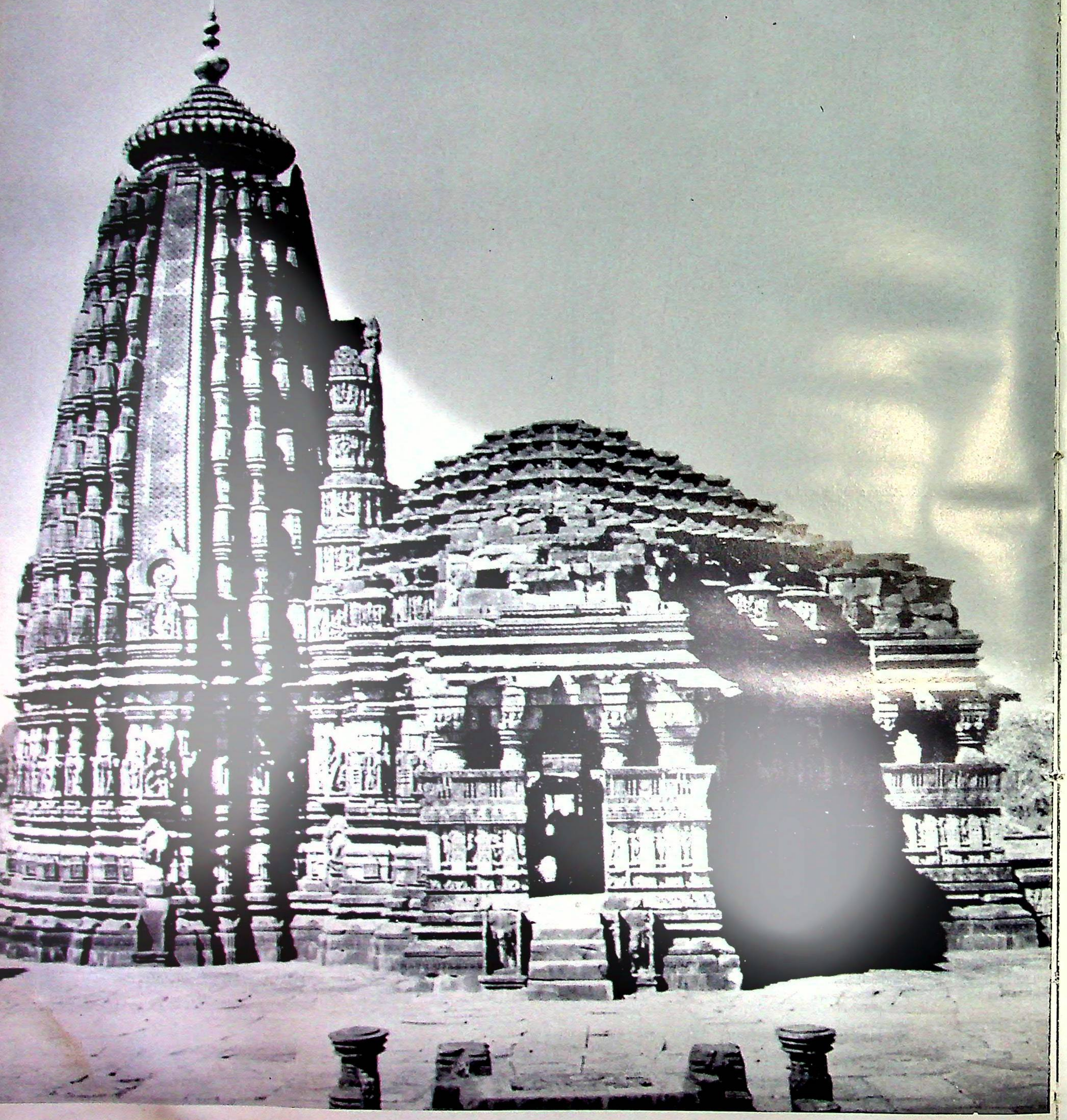
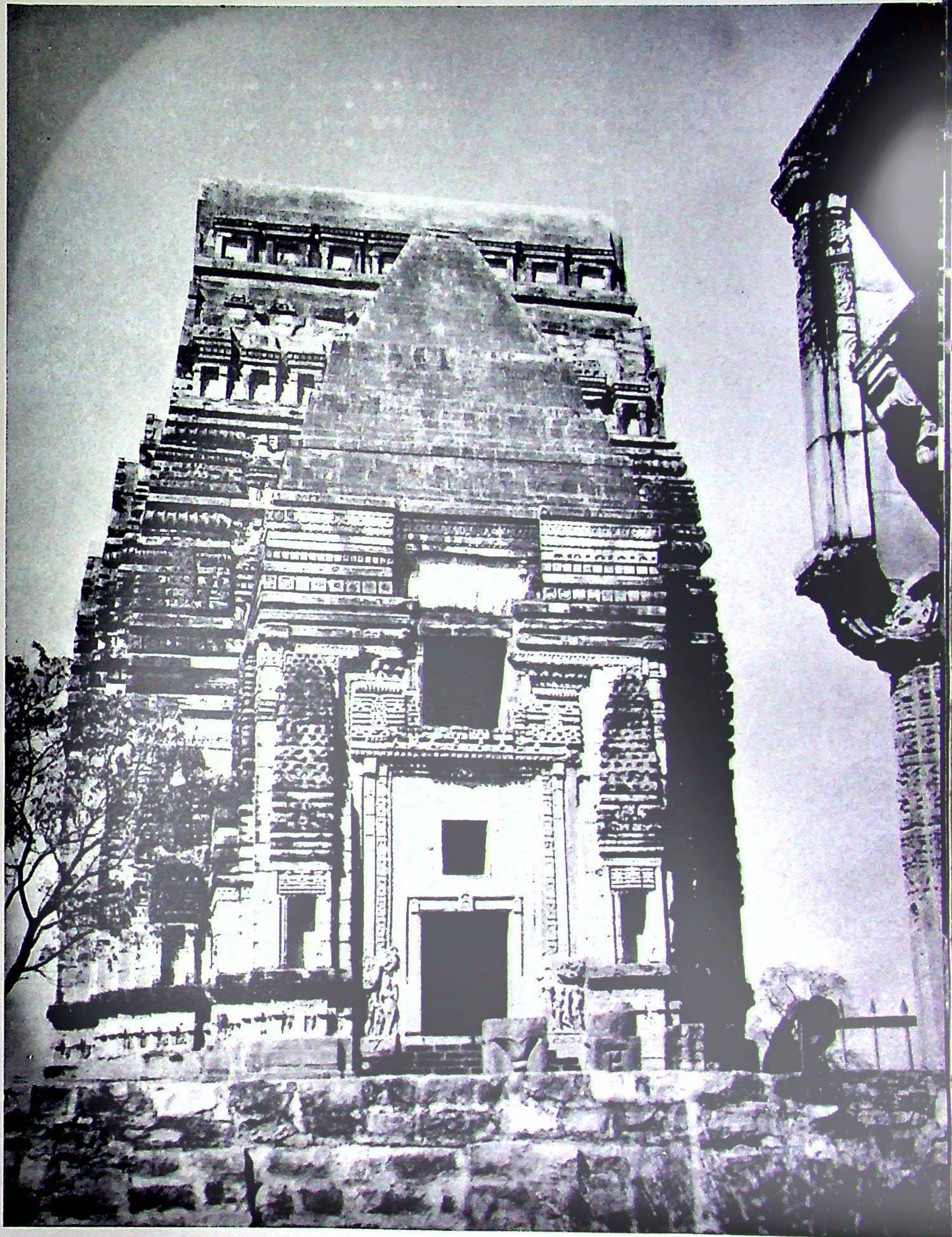
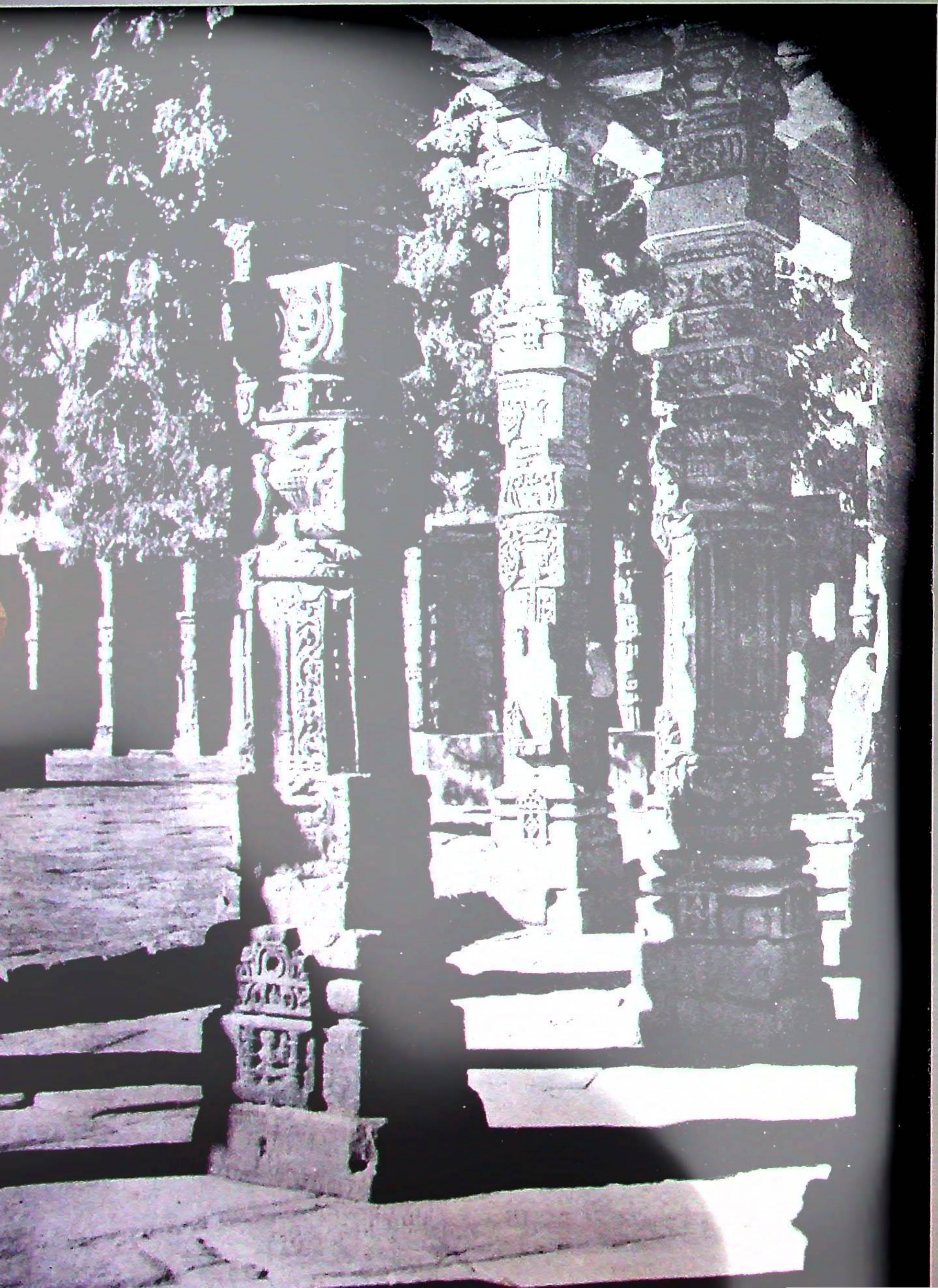


The Udaipur temple, built in the 11th century, is remarkable for its tower. It is ornamented with four flat bands whose function is to relieve the monotony of the surface decoration which is made up of a series of miniature turrets mounted one upon another.

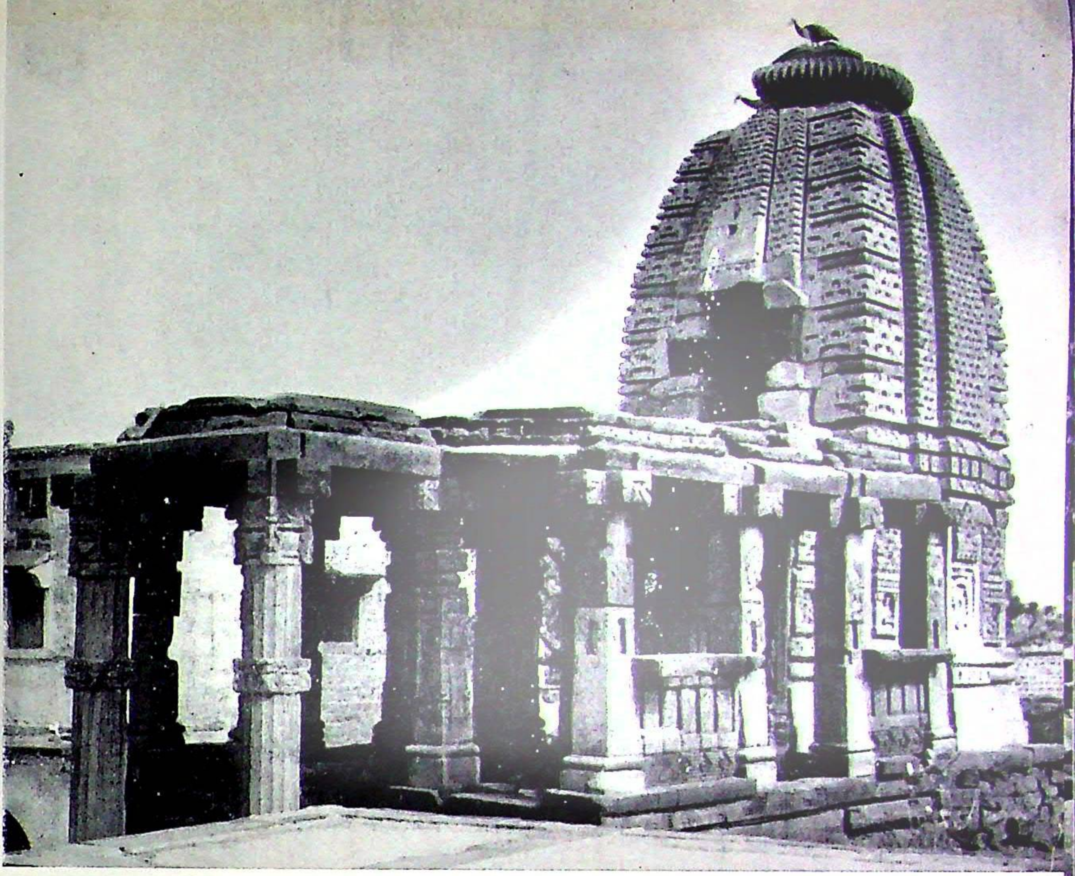


The Teli-ka-Mandir, perhaps the earliest temple in the Gwalior Fort, is a rare specimen. Its tower, instead of being a spire, terminates in a vault, resembling a Buddhist Chaitya.

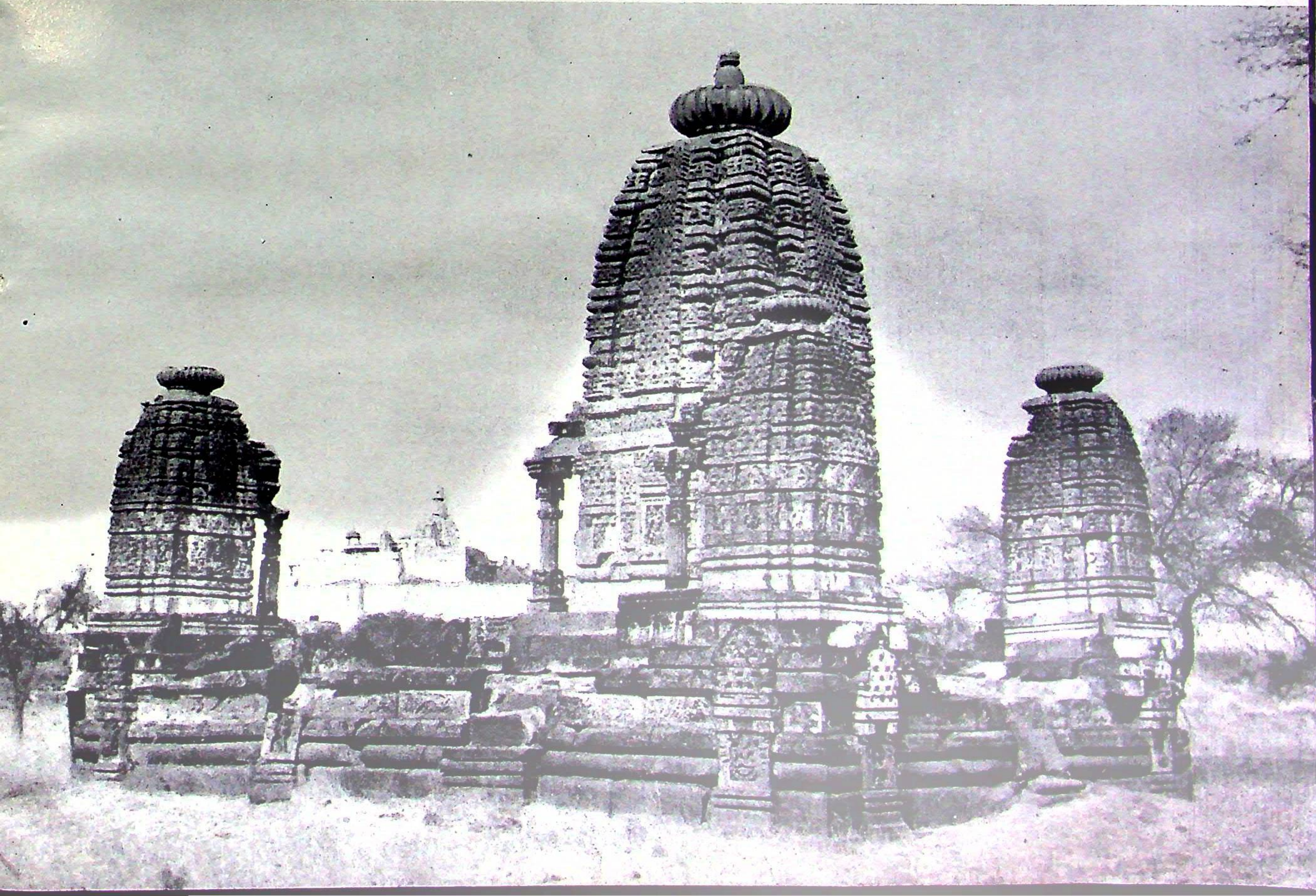
Western India

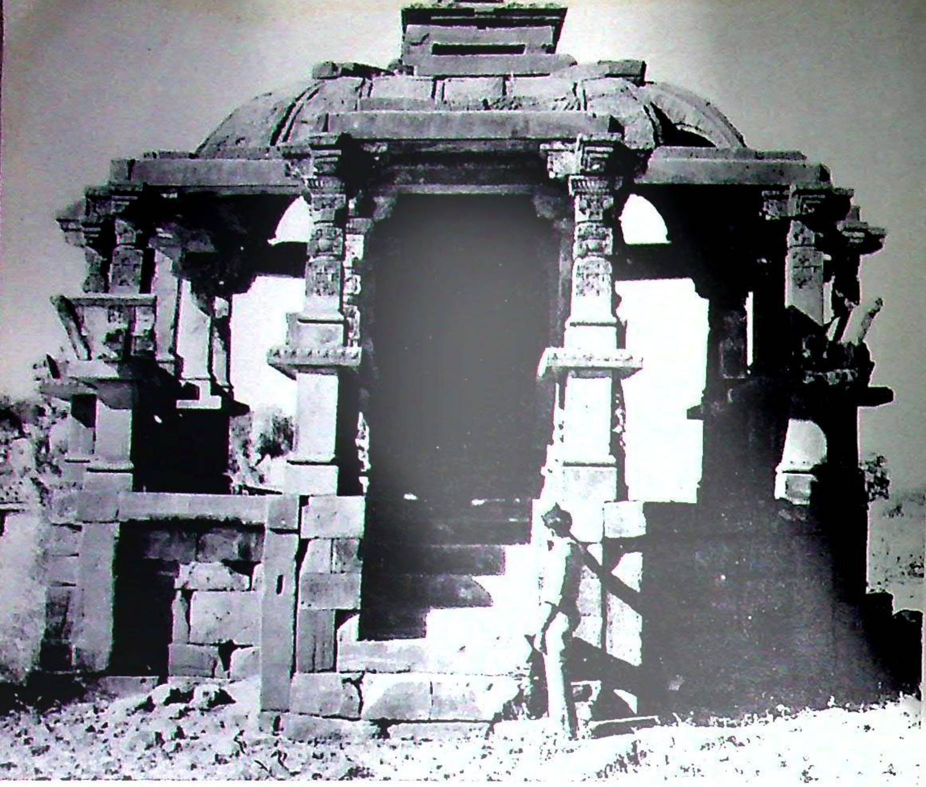


The mosque adjoining the Qutb Minar near Delhi brings to memory the many 10th and 11th century temples of this region. The pillars and ceilings obtained from those temples were used in building this prayer hall of the mosque.



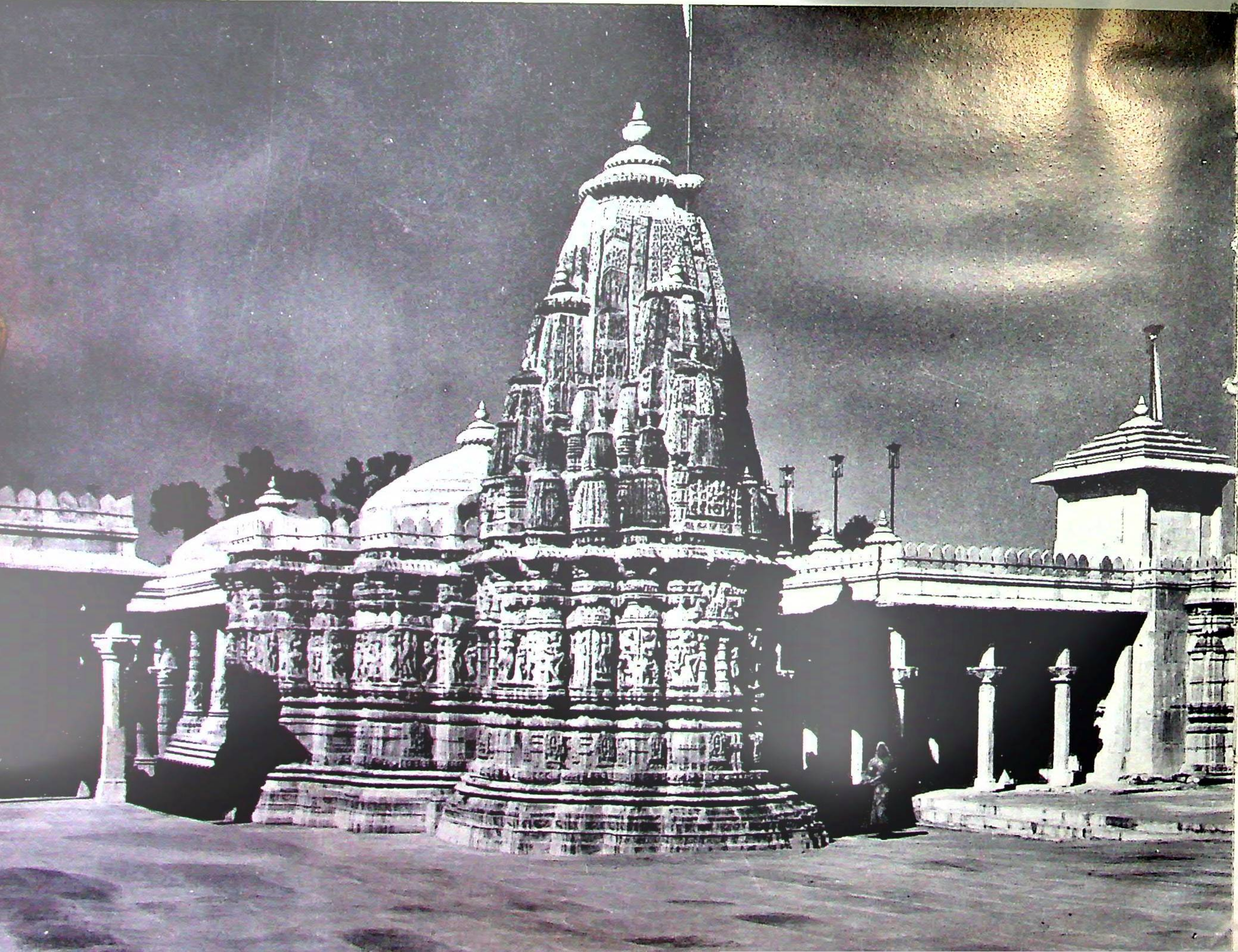
Osia, near Jodhpur, is the site of sixteen temples. Of these, the one dedicated to Sun-god (right) and another to Siva-Vishnu, (below) are notable for their simplicity and proportion.

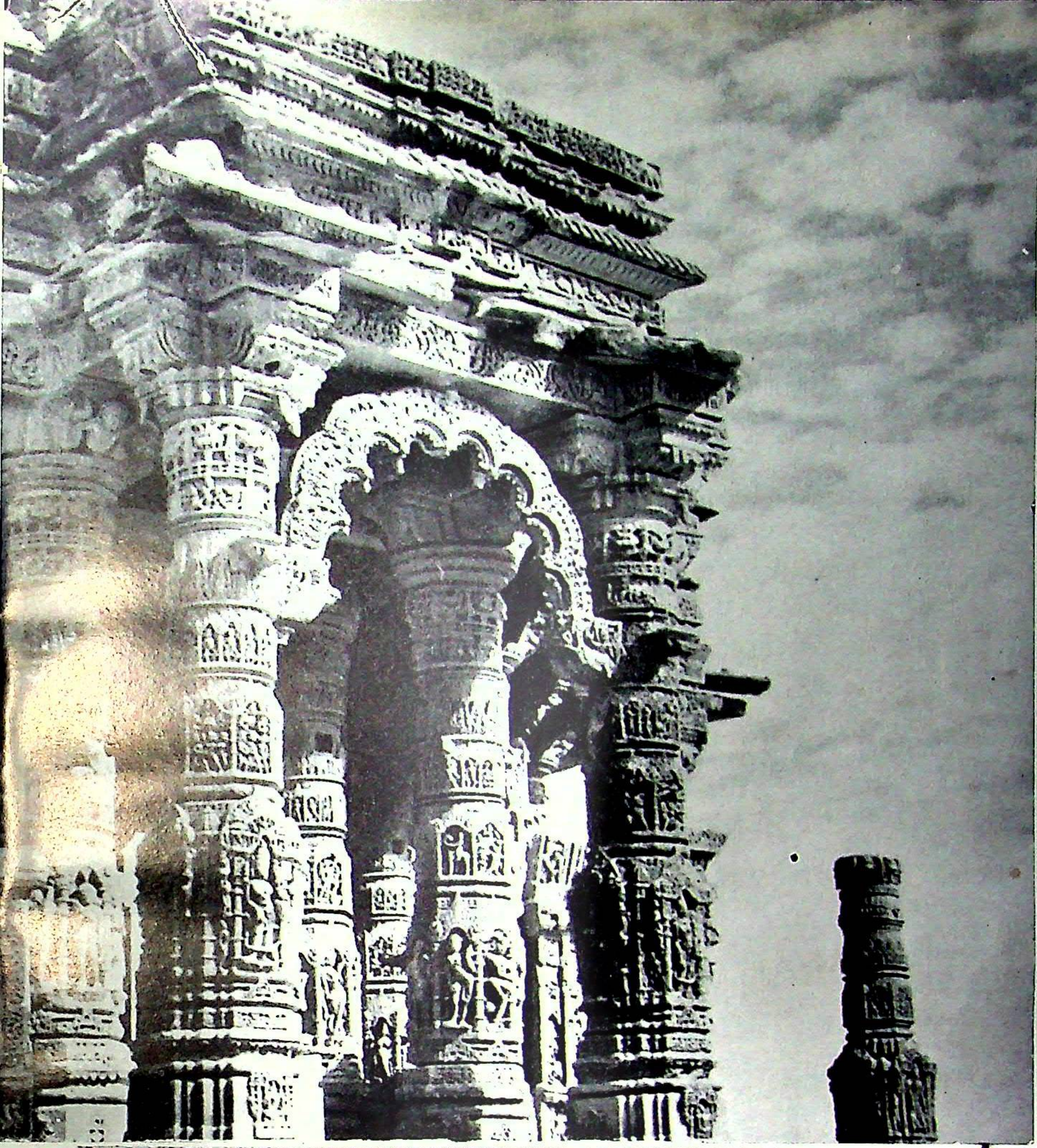




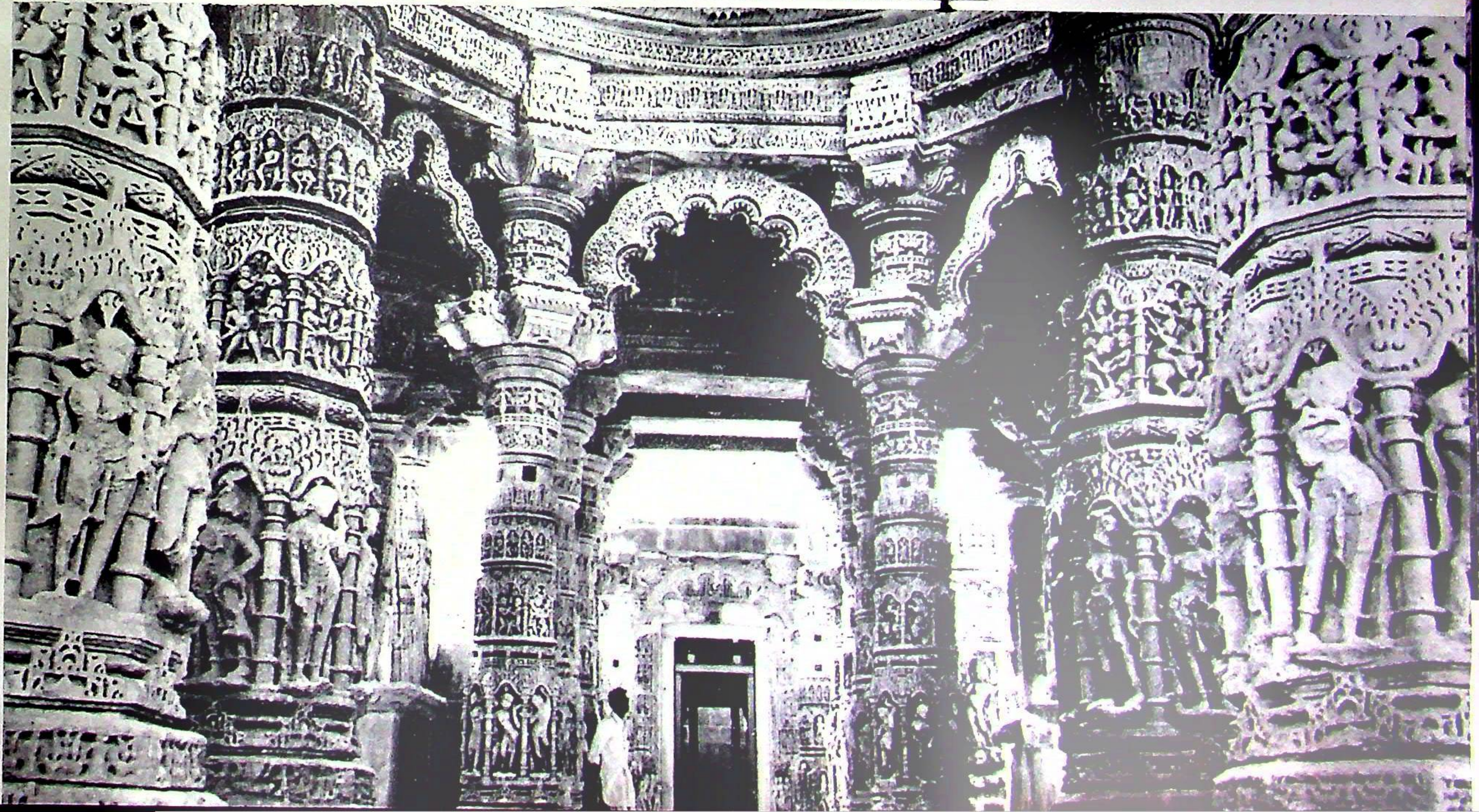
An interesting example, very different from this, is the Mata Temple at Chittor dedicated to Siva's consort, Parvati.

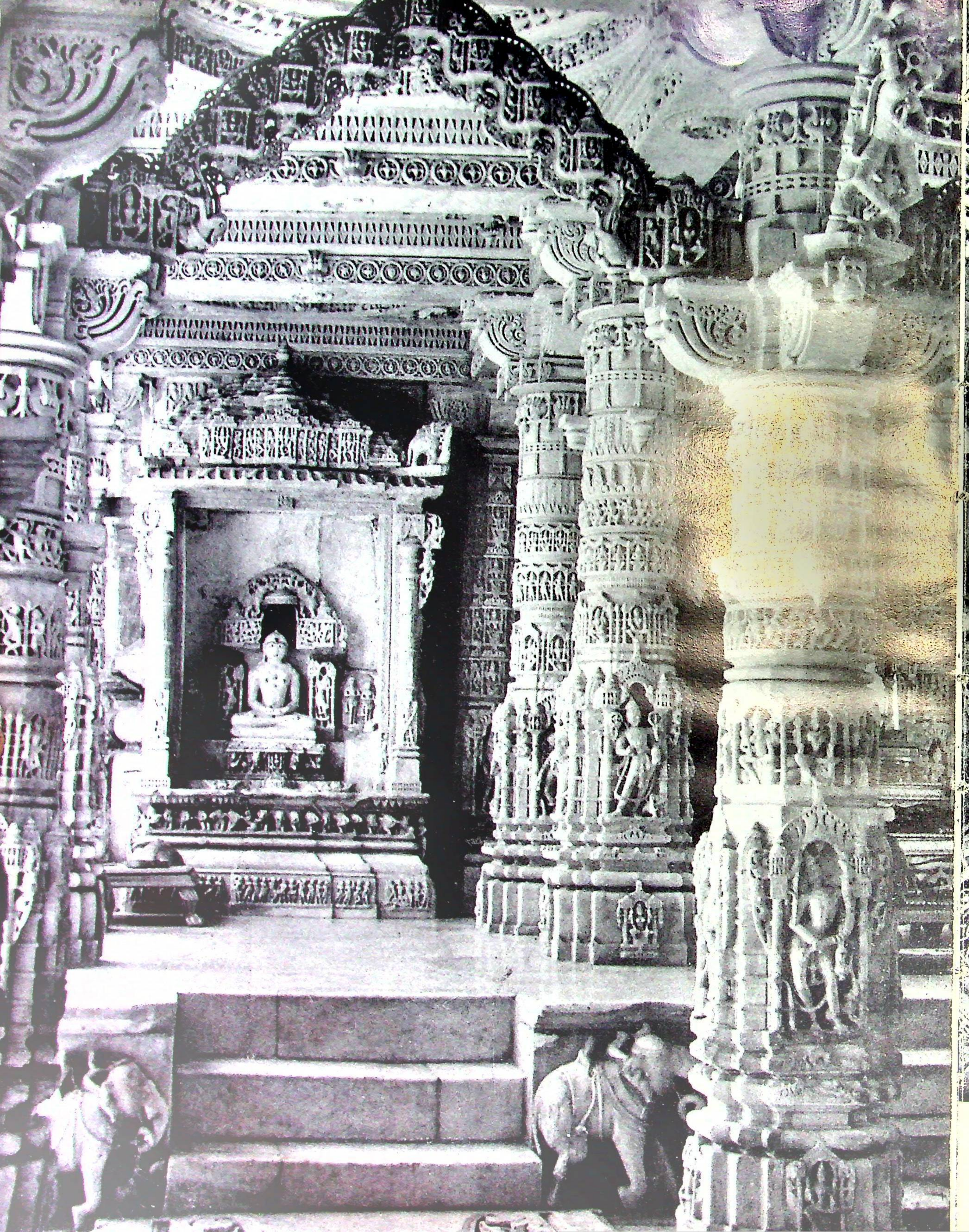
At Chittorgarh the beautifully carved Sati's Temple recalls the Central Indian style. Its outer walls pulsate with figure sculptures carved with great skill.

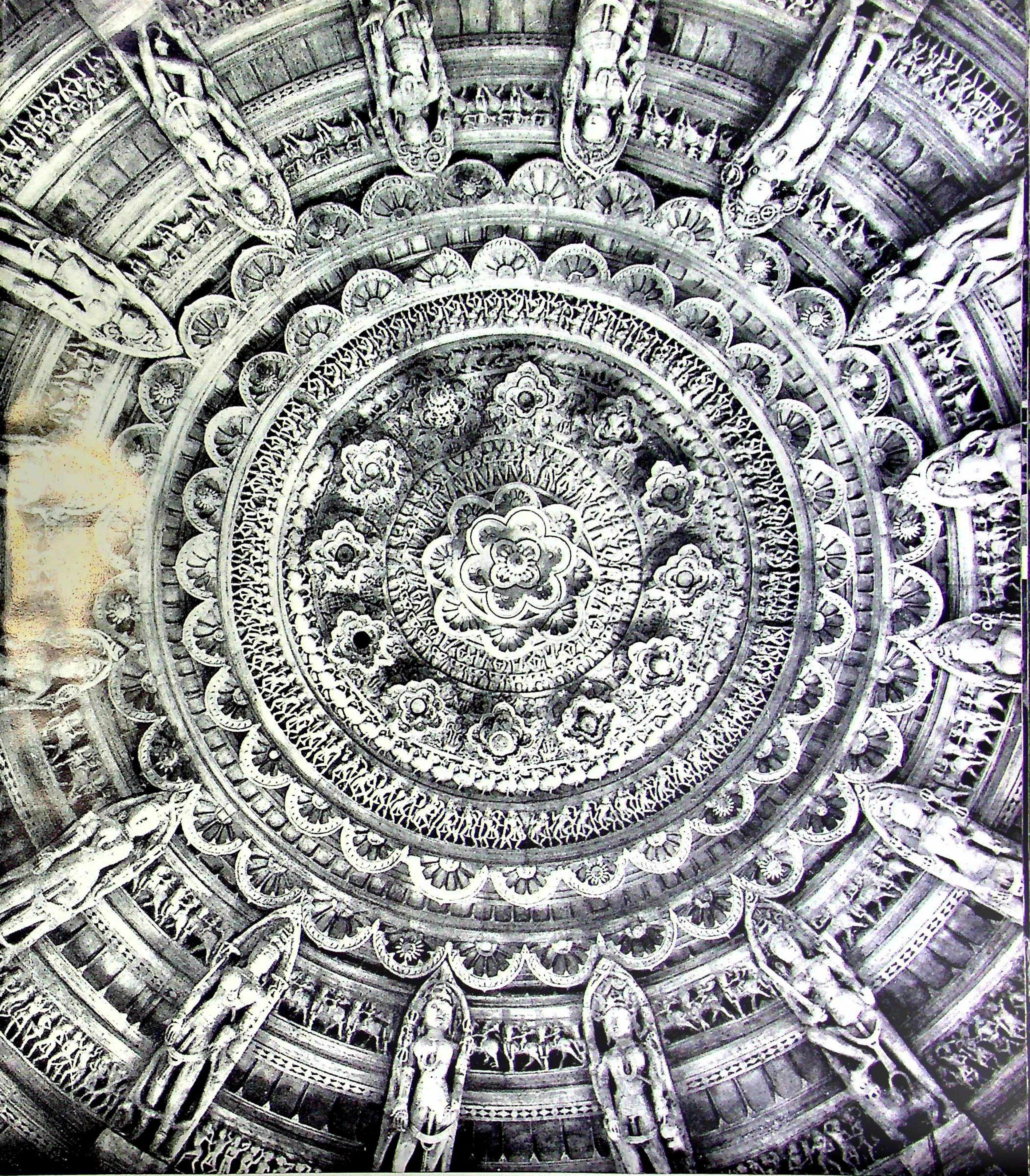




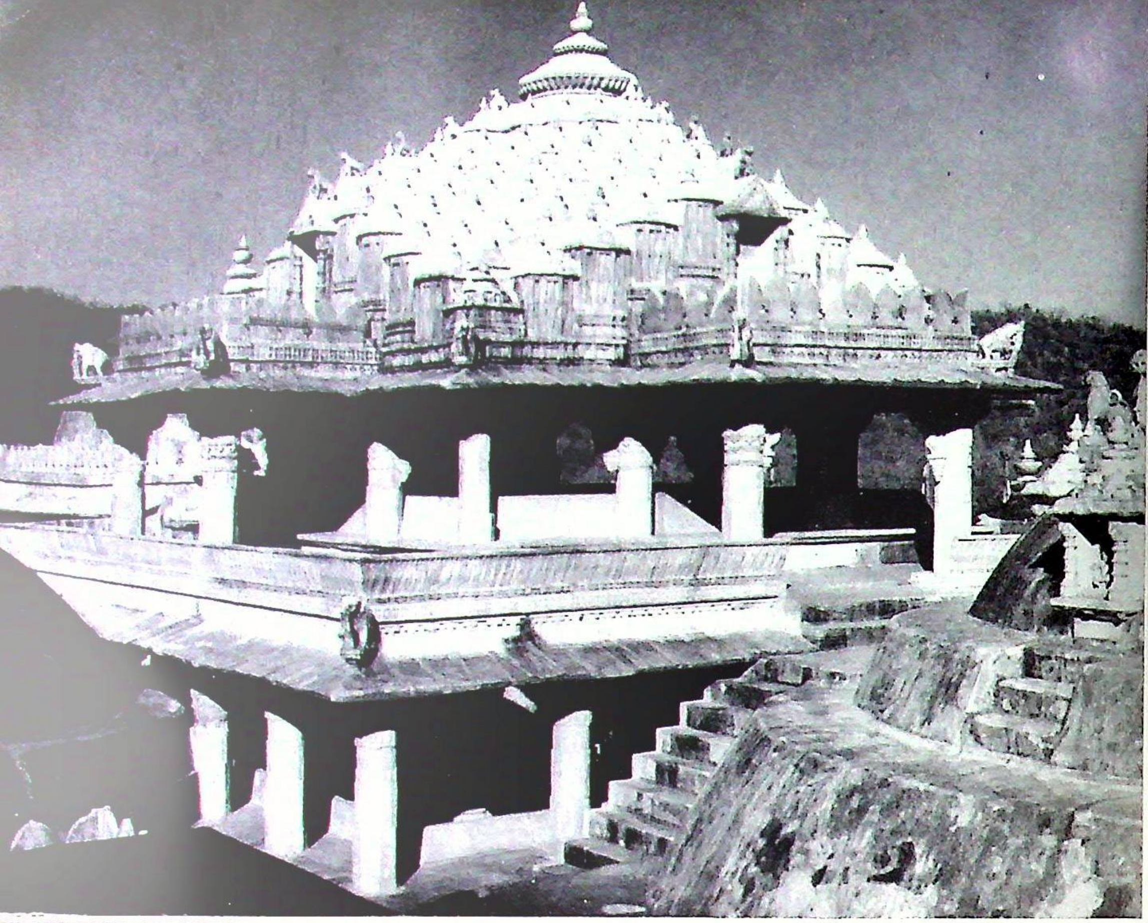
The jewel-like quality of Gujarat temples can be seen in this partly ruined Sun Temple at Modhera, built over 900 years ago. It is a well-proportioned structure with a heavily carved pillared hall (below).





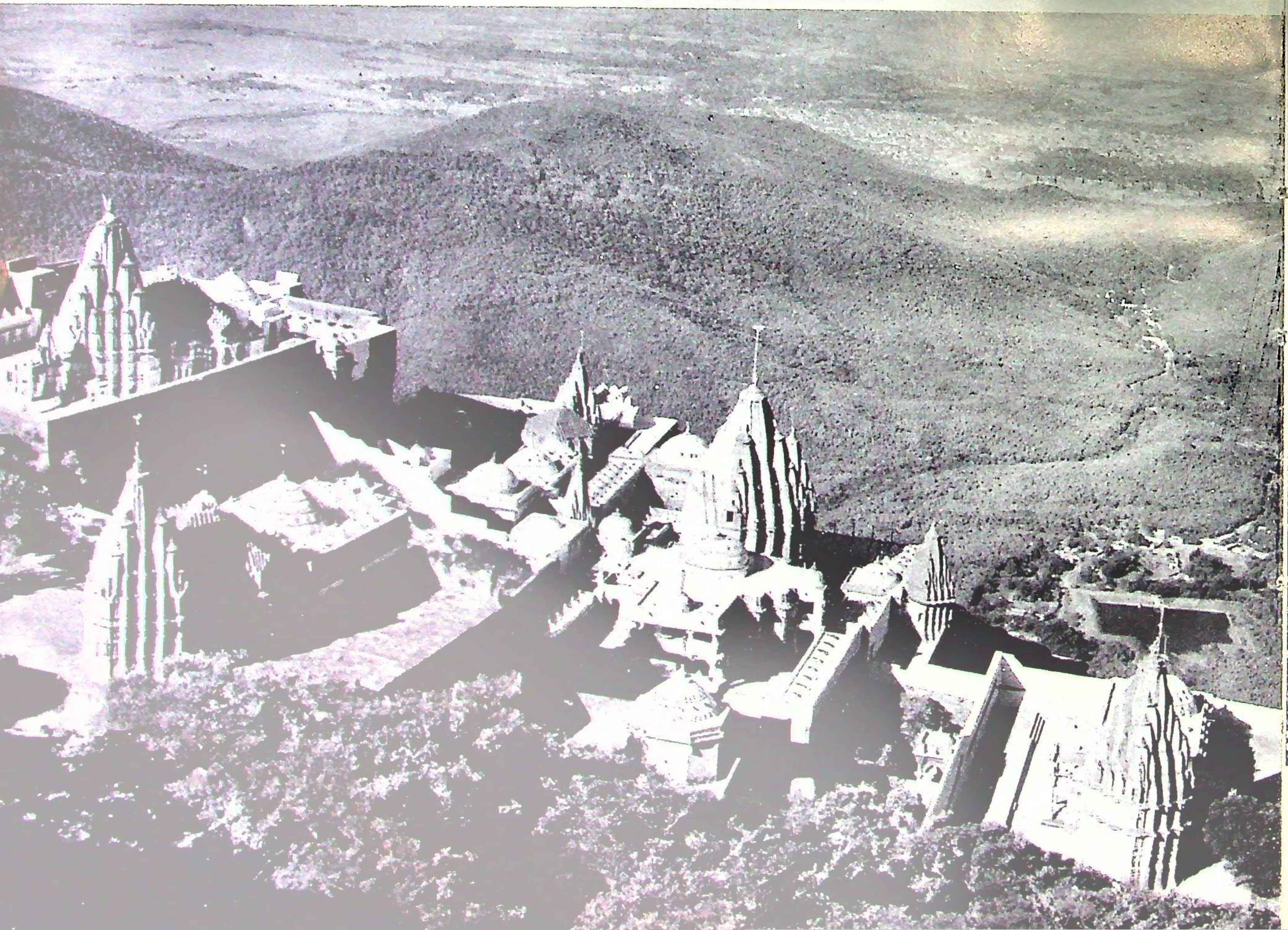


Among the most celebrated of India's temples are those of Mt. Abu, in Rajasthan. Built entirely of white marble, the Vimala Vasahi Temple is a staggering example of what the Indian carver can do to stone. These two views of the temple's interior defy verbal description. A ceiling from the pillared hall of the Vimala Vasahi Temple, formed by concentric rings, contains an endless variety of carvings. The lotus pendant has always been a favourite motif with Hindu builders.

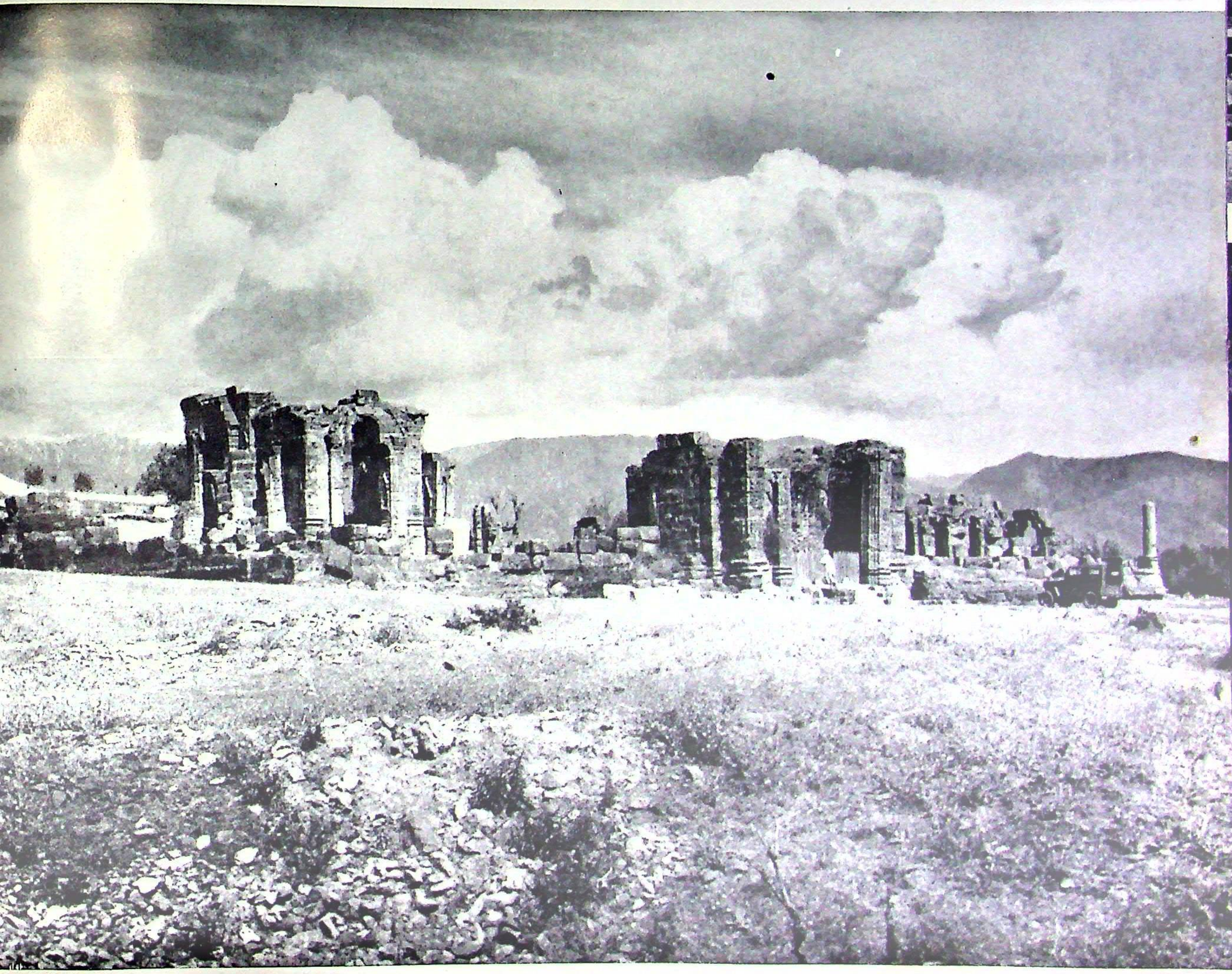


From the ritualistic point the most complete example of a Jain shrine in Rajasthan is this Chaumukh or quadruple temple at Ranapur, built in 1439. It has four subsidiary shrines and eighty domes supported by 400 columns.

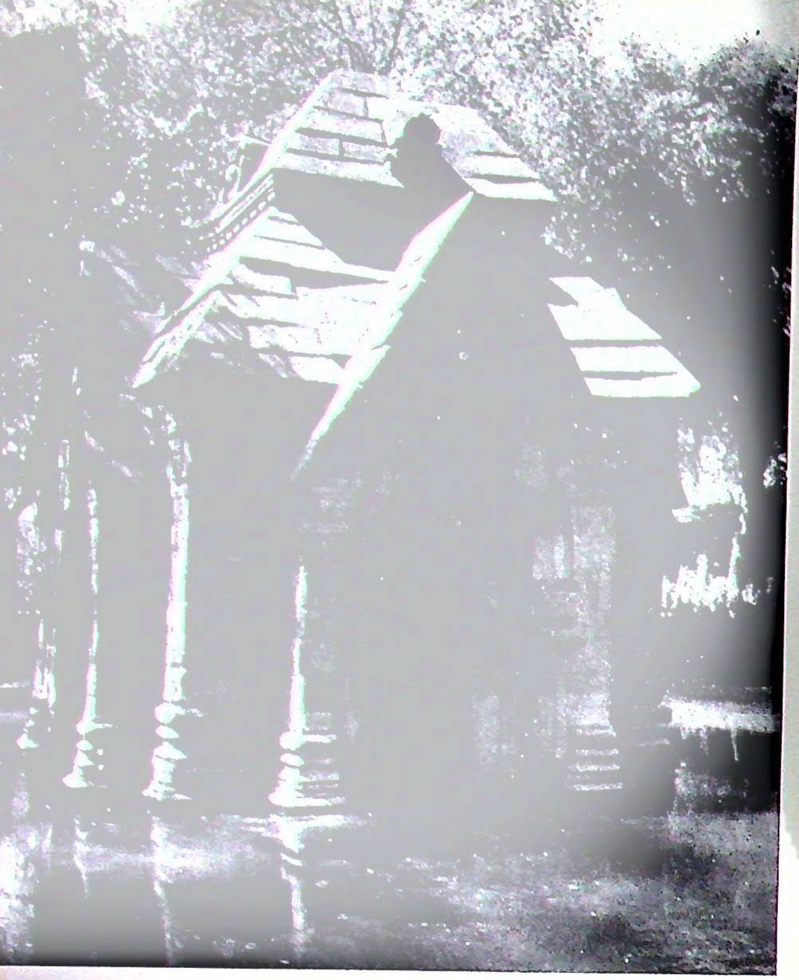
Palitana, which perches on the Satrunjaya hill, bristles with Jain temples. Several of them, built in the 11th century, were restored or rebuilt many centuries later.



Kashmir



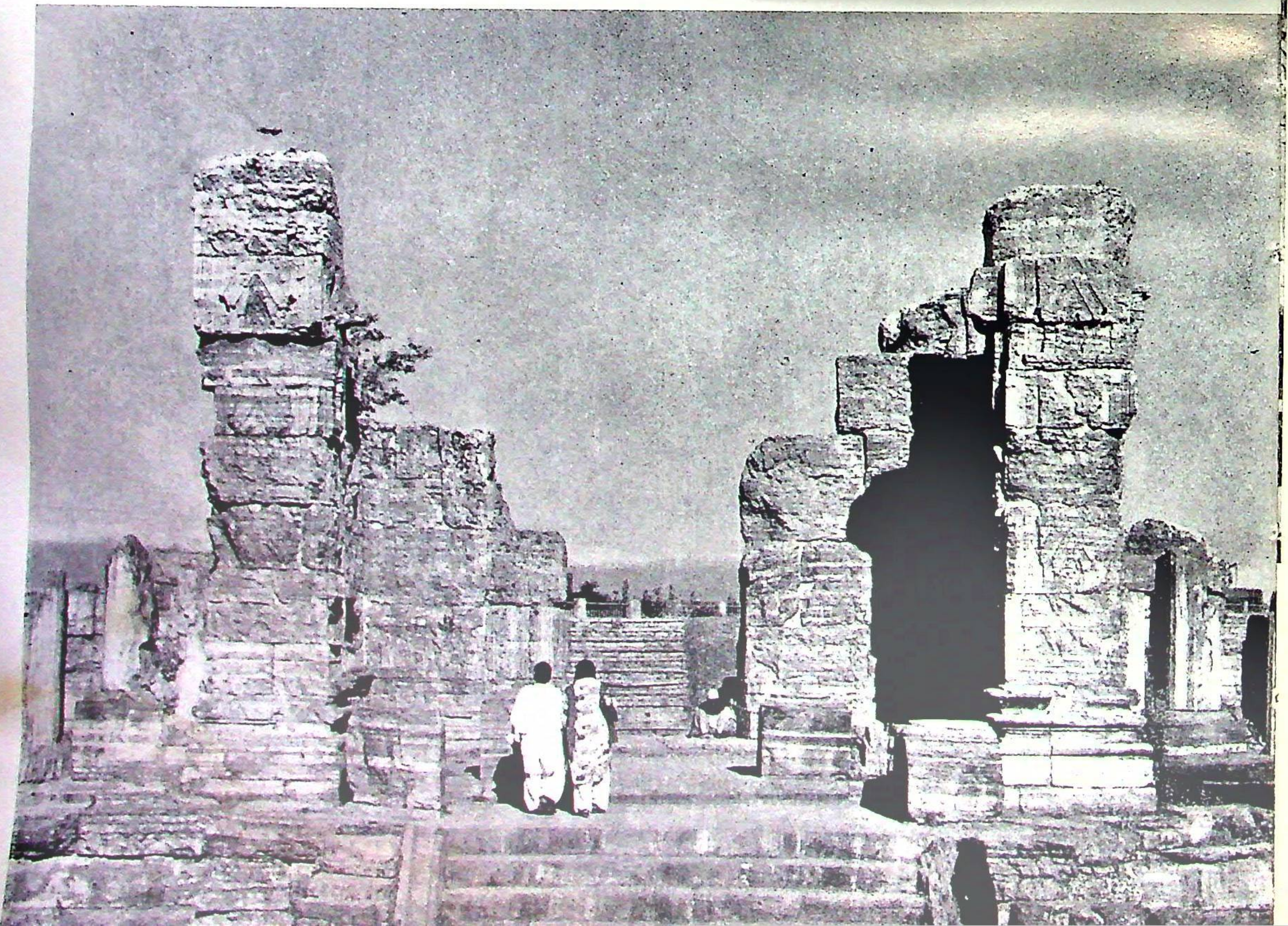
Among the great temples of Kashmir, the Sun Temple at Martand (now in ruins) represents an architectural expressiveness of a high order and is the supreme model of the Kashmir style.

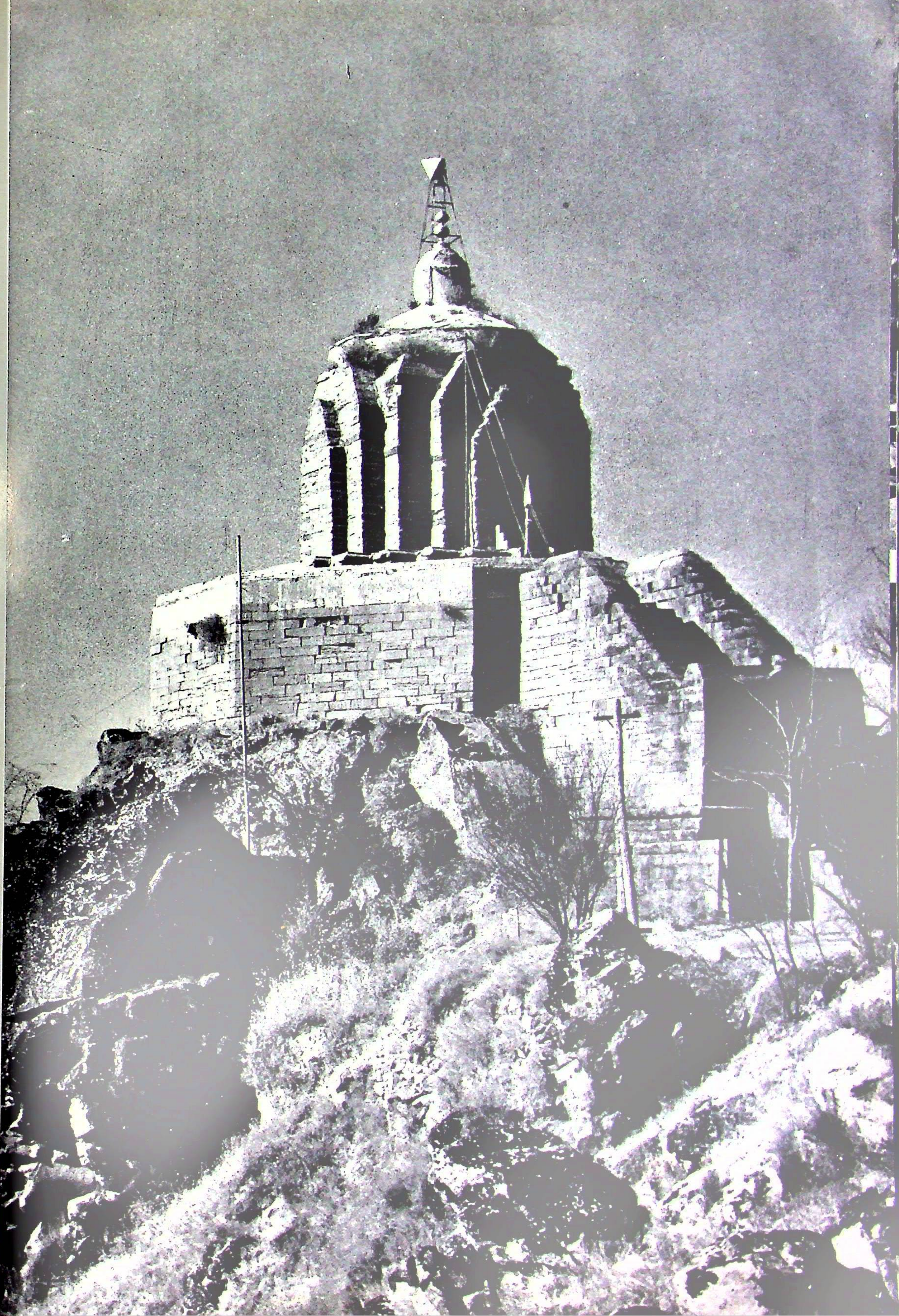


The small, well preserved 12th century temple at Pandrethan gives a clear idea of how a simple Kashmir temple looks like.

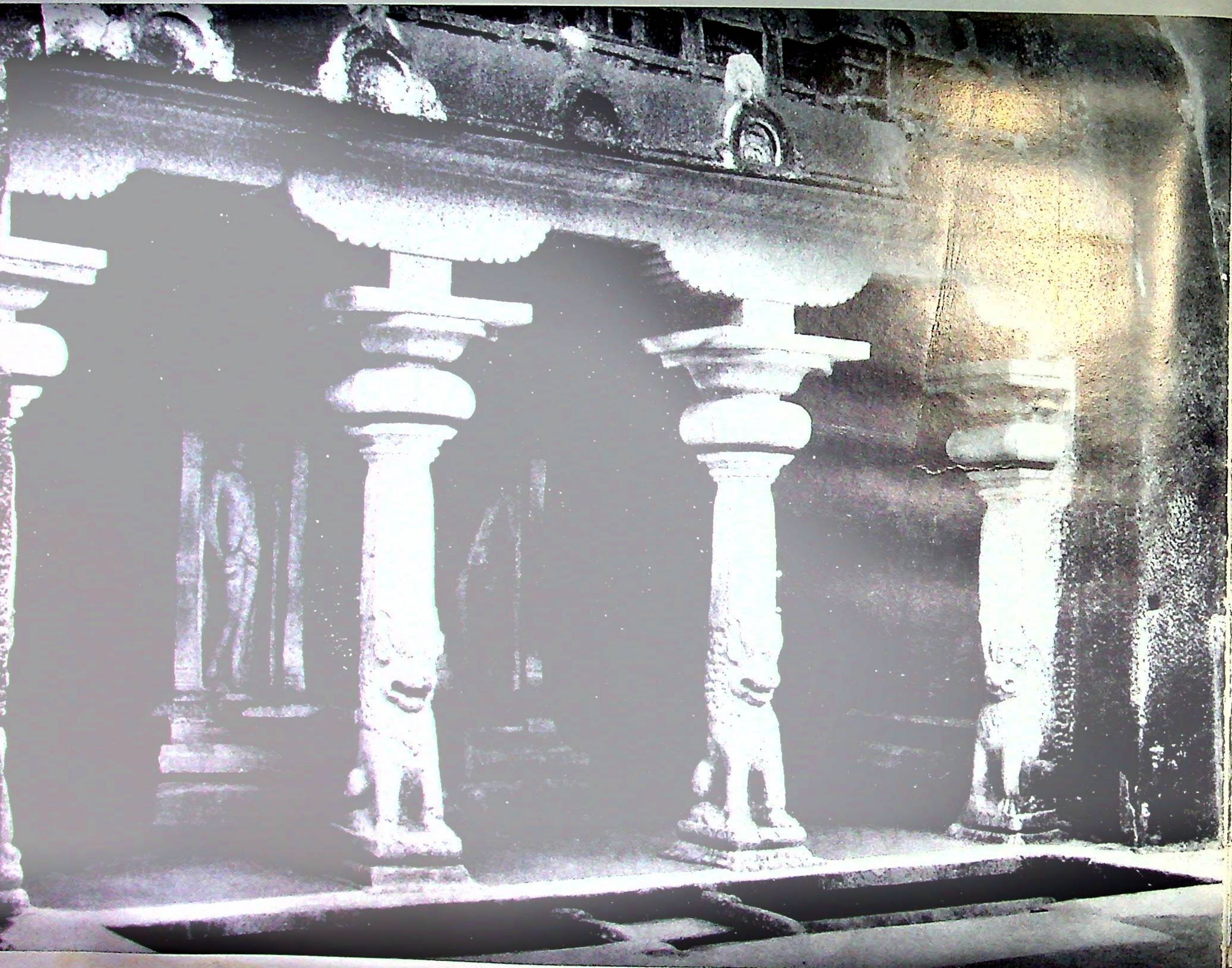
(opp. page)—The Sankaracharya Temple is of unusual design. The exterior is austere and devoid of all decoration while the interior has a simple, circular sanctuary.

Avantipur, a town 18 miles from Srinagar, is the site of another great temple, built in the 9th century. It exemplifies the maturity of the Kashmiri builder with its graceful colonnades and carvings tastefully integrated into the architecture of the building.



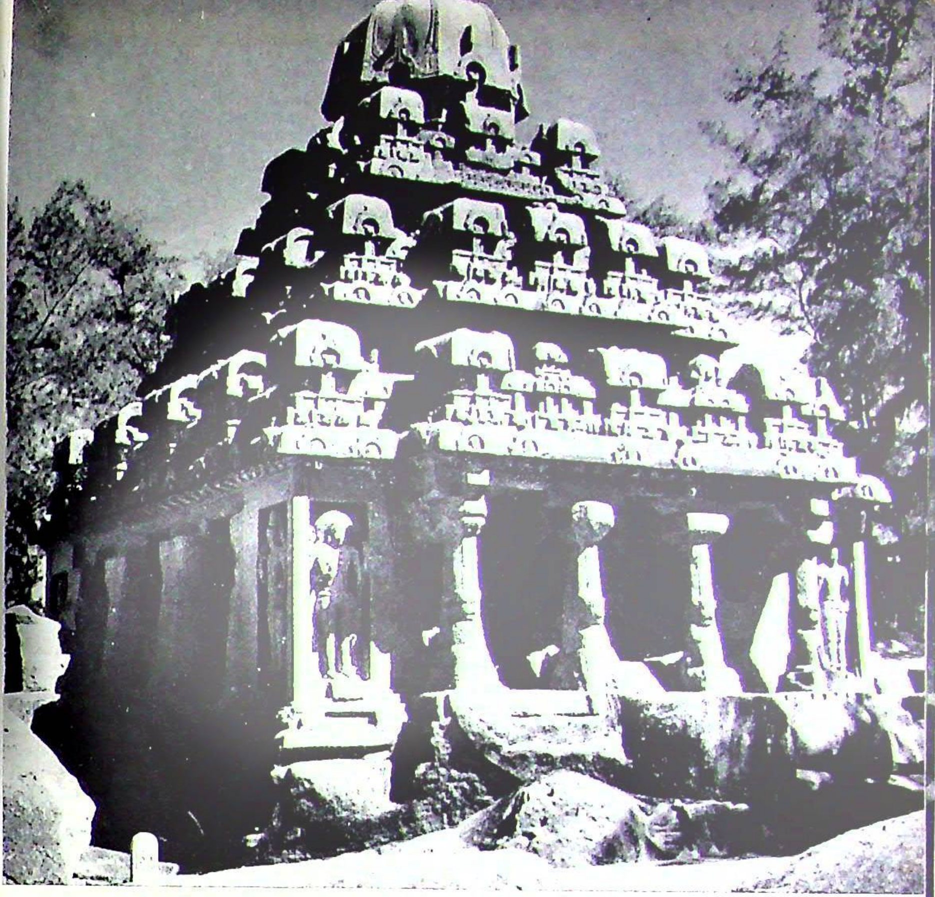


Southern India

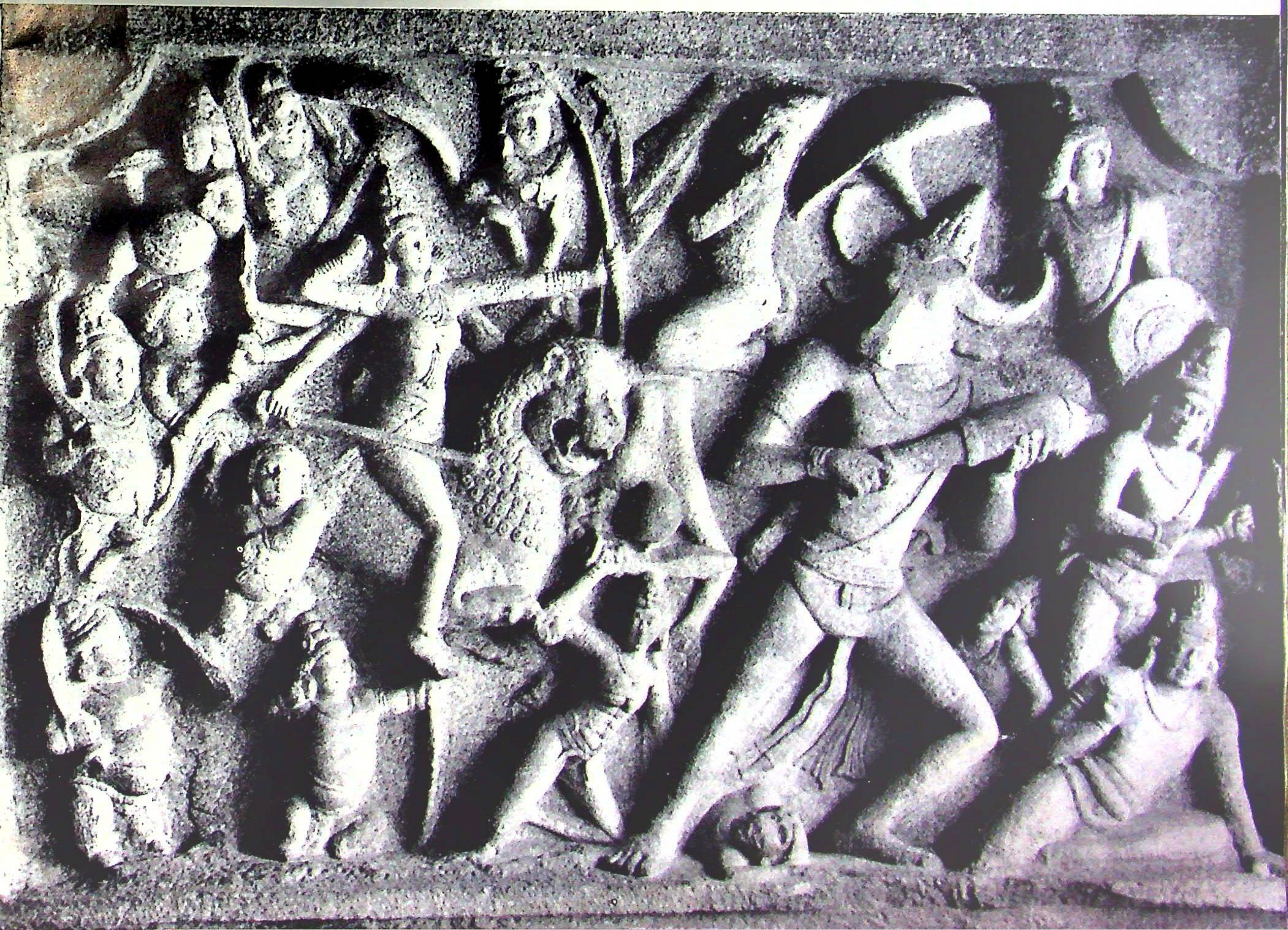


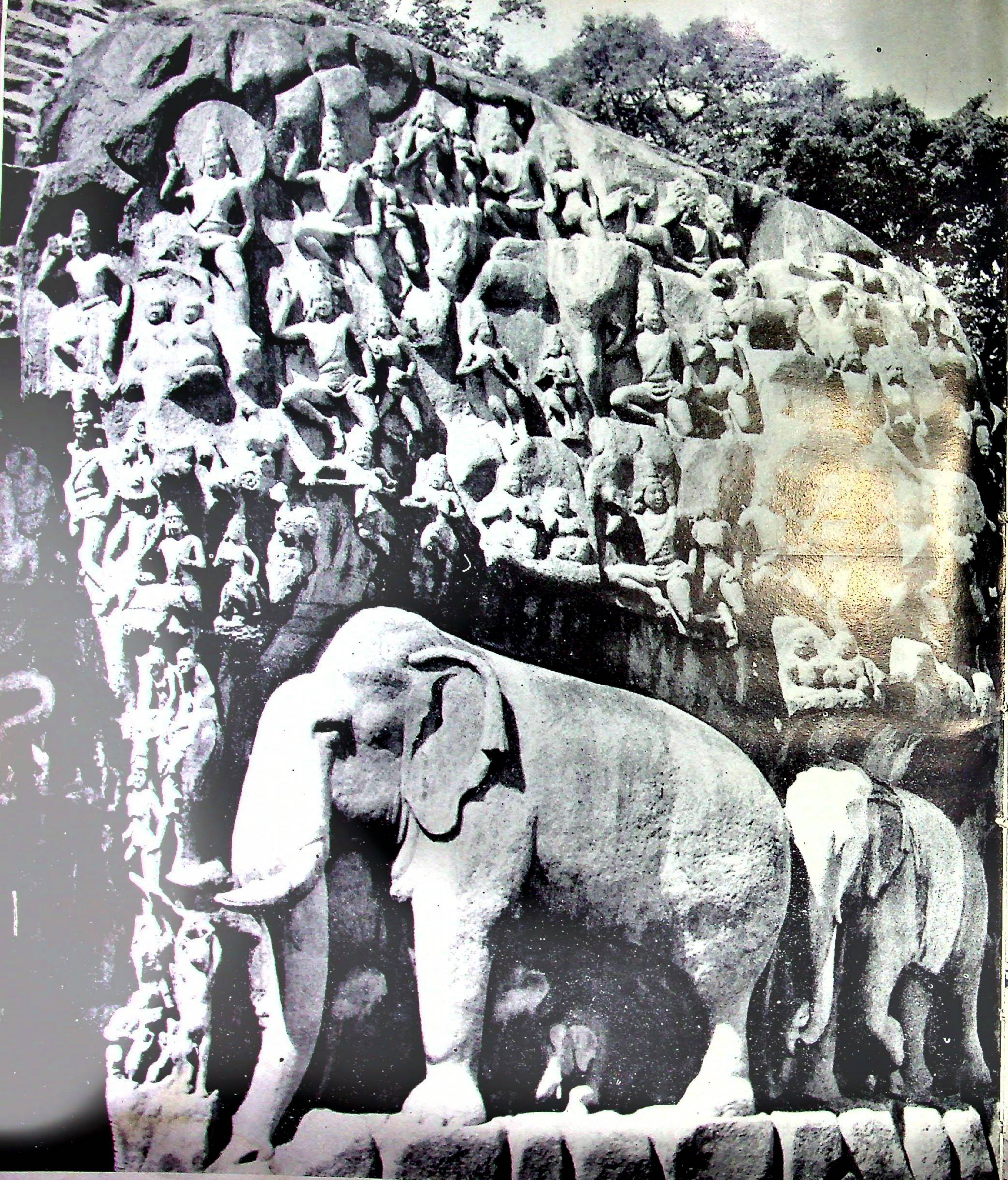
Mahabalipuram near Madras was the cradle of Dravidian architecture. Among the early examples are its rock-cut *mandapas* or pillared halls. They are notable for the style of their columns and roll cornices. Picture above is of Varaha Mandapa.

Another type of architecture at Mahabalipuram are the rock-hewn *rathas*, derived from the Buddhist monastery. They range from the primitive hut-type shrine as in the Draupadi Ratha (seen later) to the more sophisticated Dharmaraja Ratha (right) with its pillared portico and pyramidal tower.



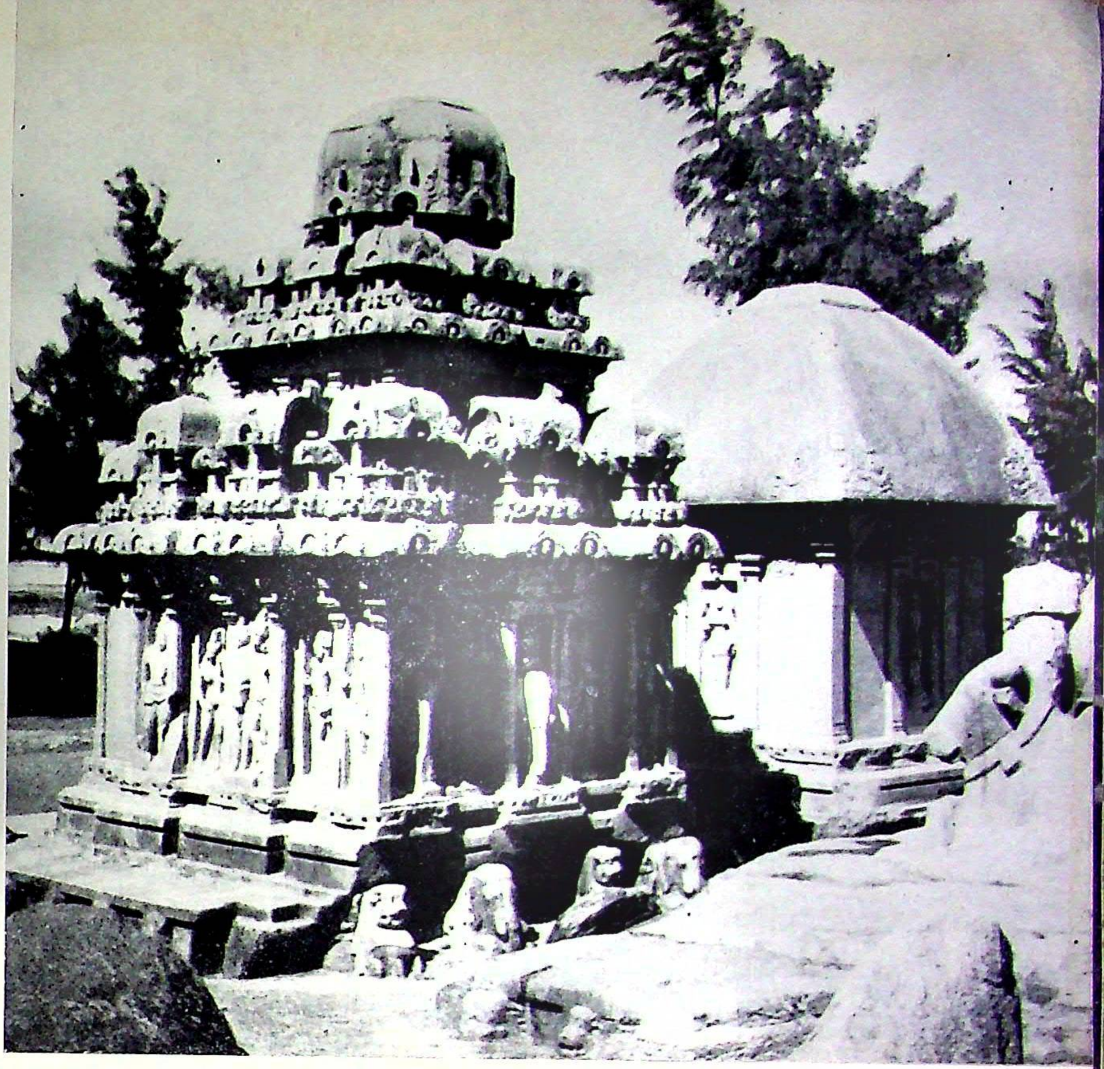
These *mandapas* are also remarkable for the blending of sculpture with their architecture. This panel forcefully depicts the fight of Goddess Durga with the buffalo-headed demon, Mahisha.



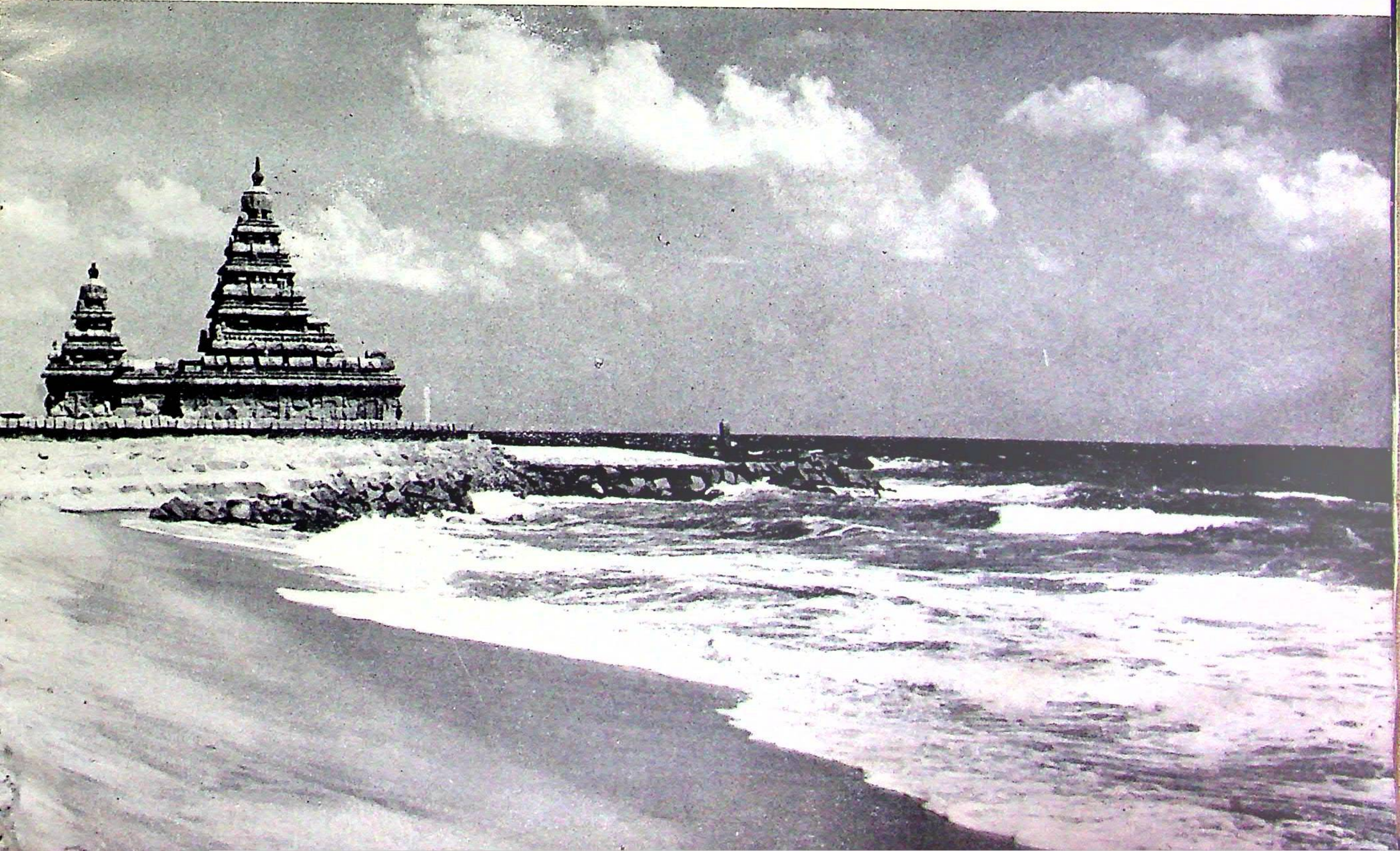


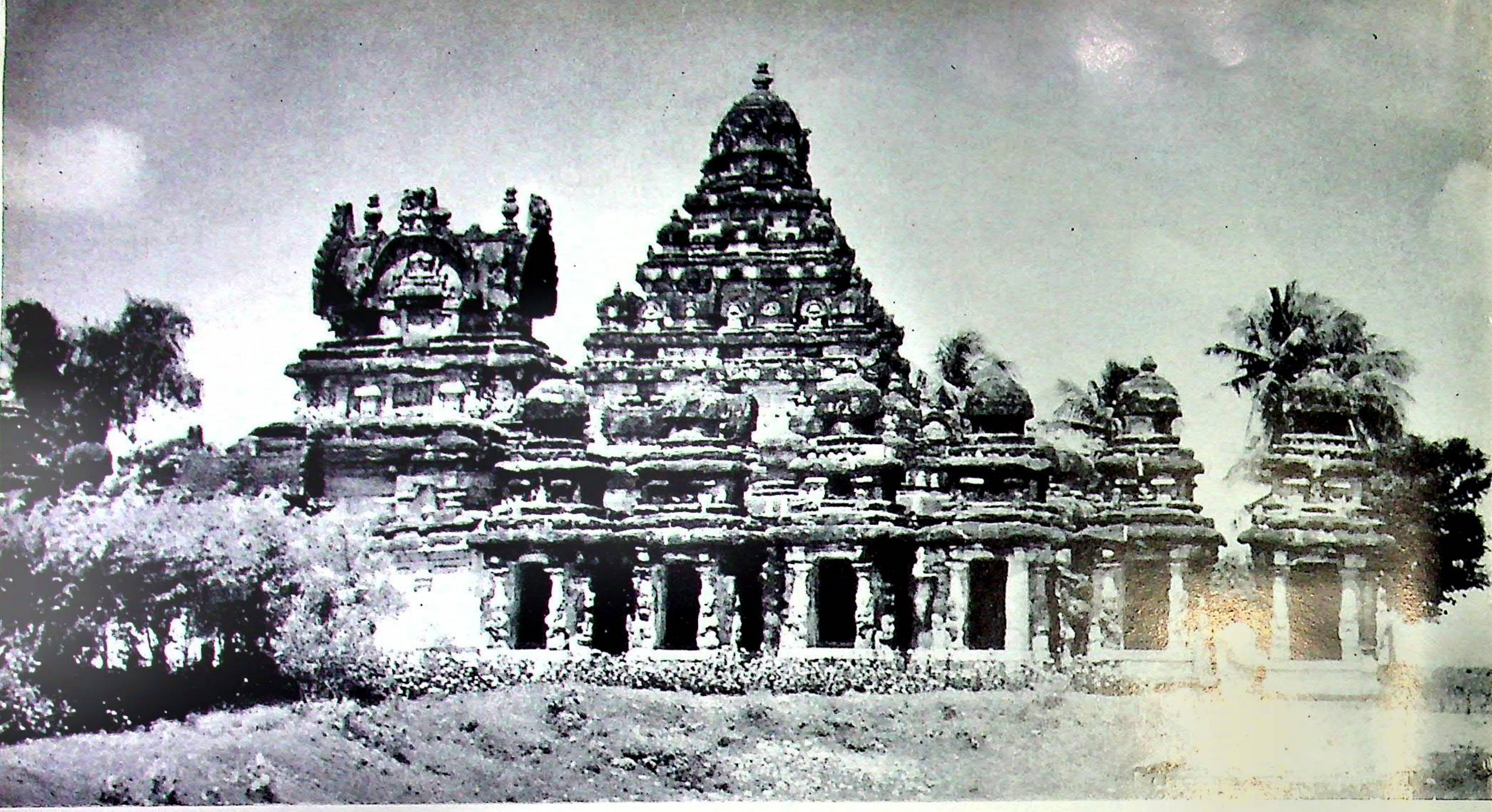
The huge whale-back rock (called the Descent of Ganga) near the *rathas* has been covered thickly with fine sculptures. Subjects portrayed are forest scenes, hermits, serpents, nymphs and celestial beings.

Arjuna Ratha and the hut-type Draupadi Ratha.

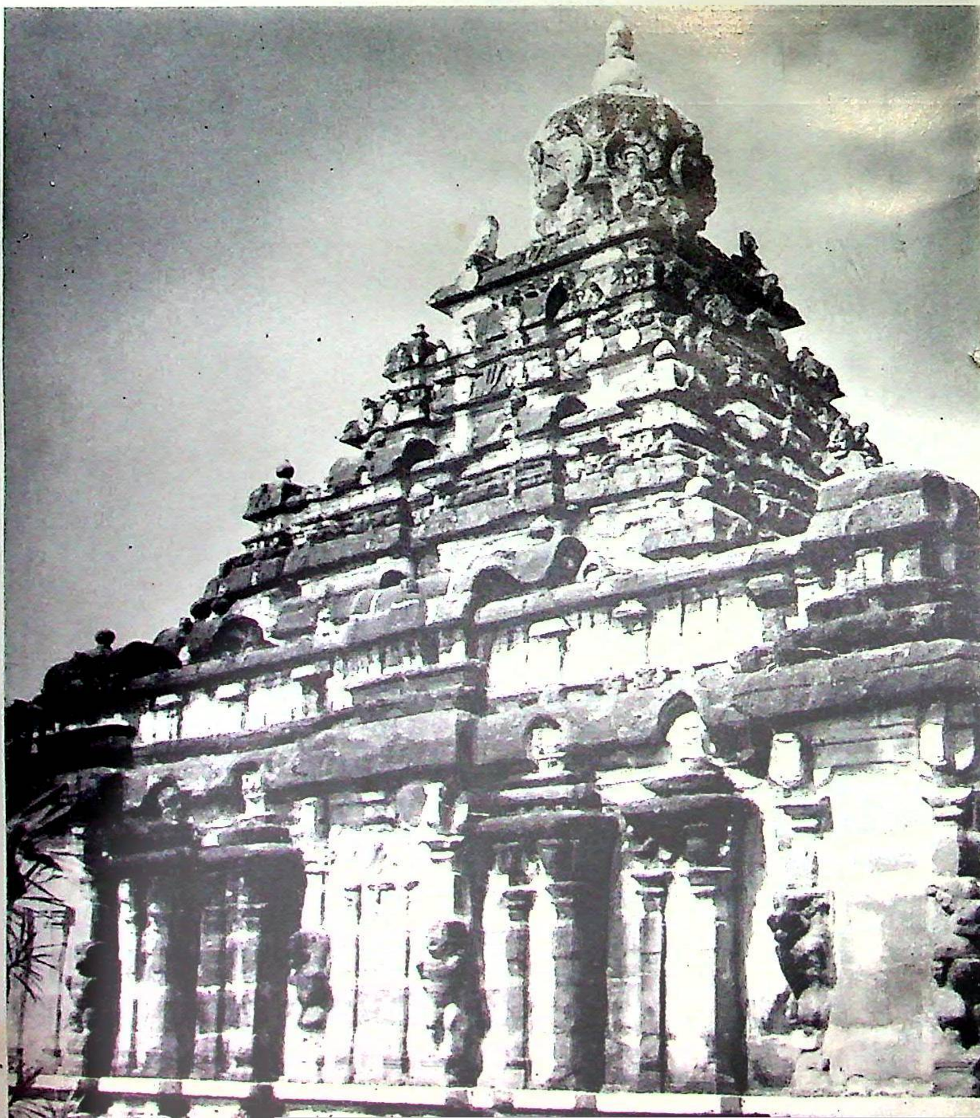


The first Pallava shrine to be built of dressed stone is this Shore Temple (8th century) at Mahabalipuram. Being architecturally more rational, it marks a distinct advance on the earlier rock-cut style and is notable for its lightness and soaring quality.



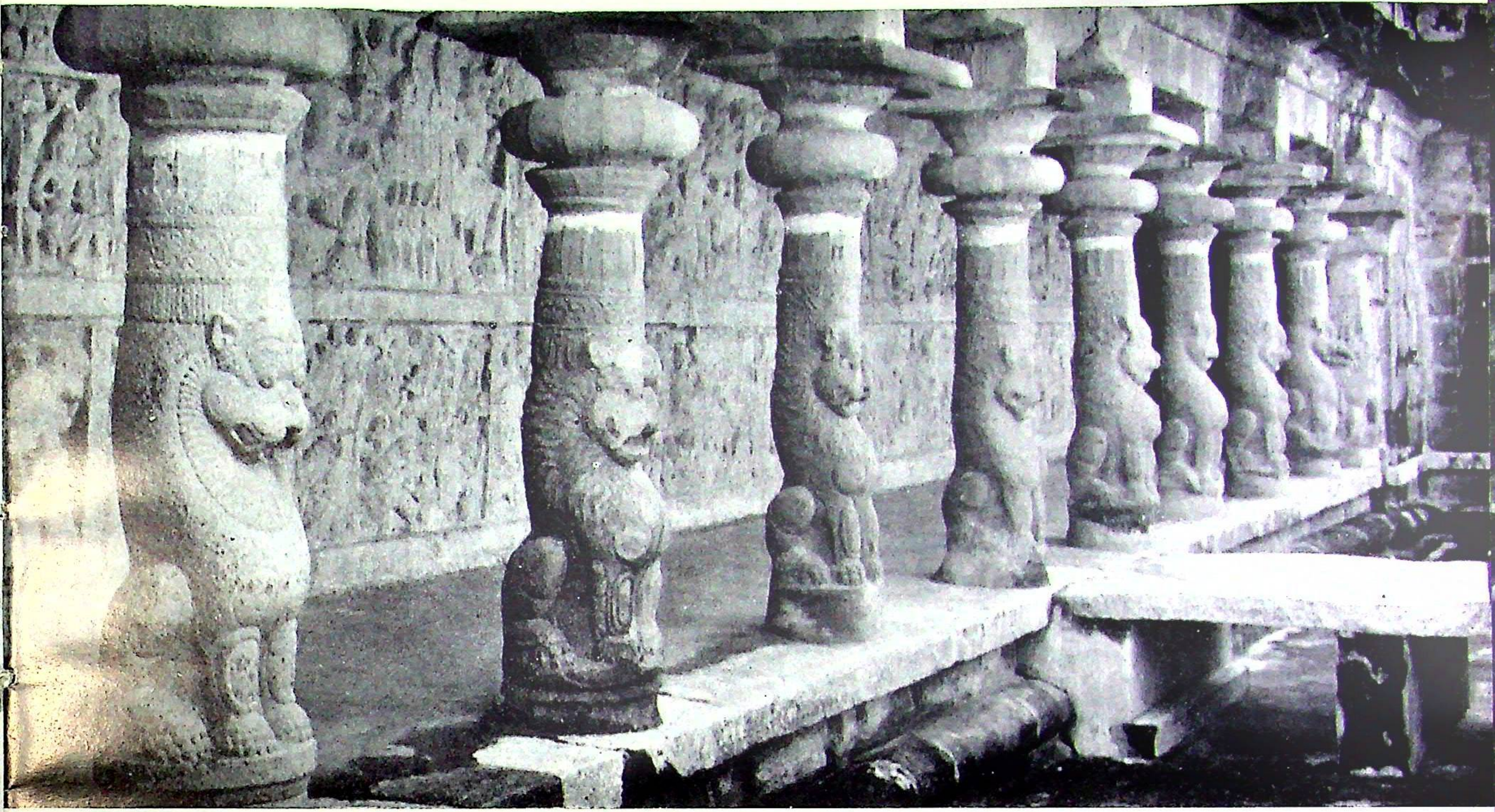


Another well-planned organic structure of the Shore Temple style is the Kailasanatha at Kanchipuram. With its pyramidal tower, a pillared hall and the vestibule, all enclosed in a wall topped by a parapet of cupolas, the Kailasanatha Temple represents the culmination of the Pallava style.

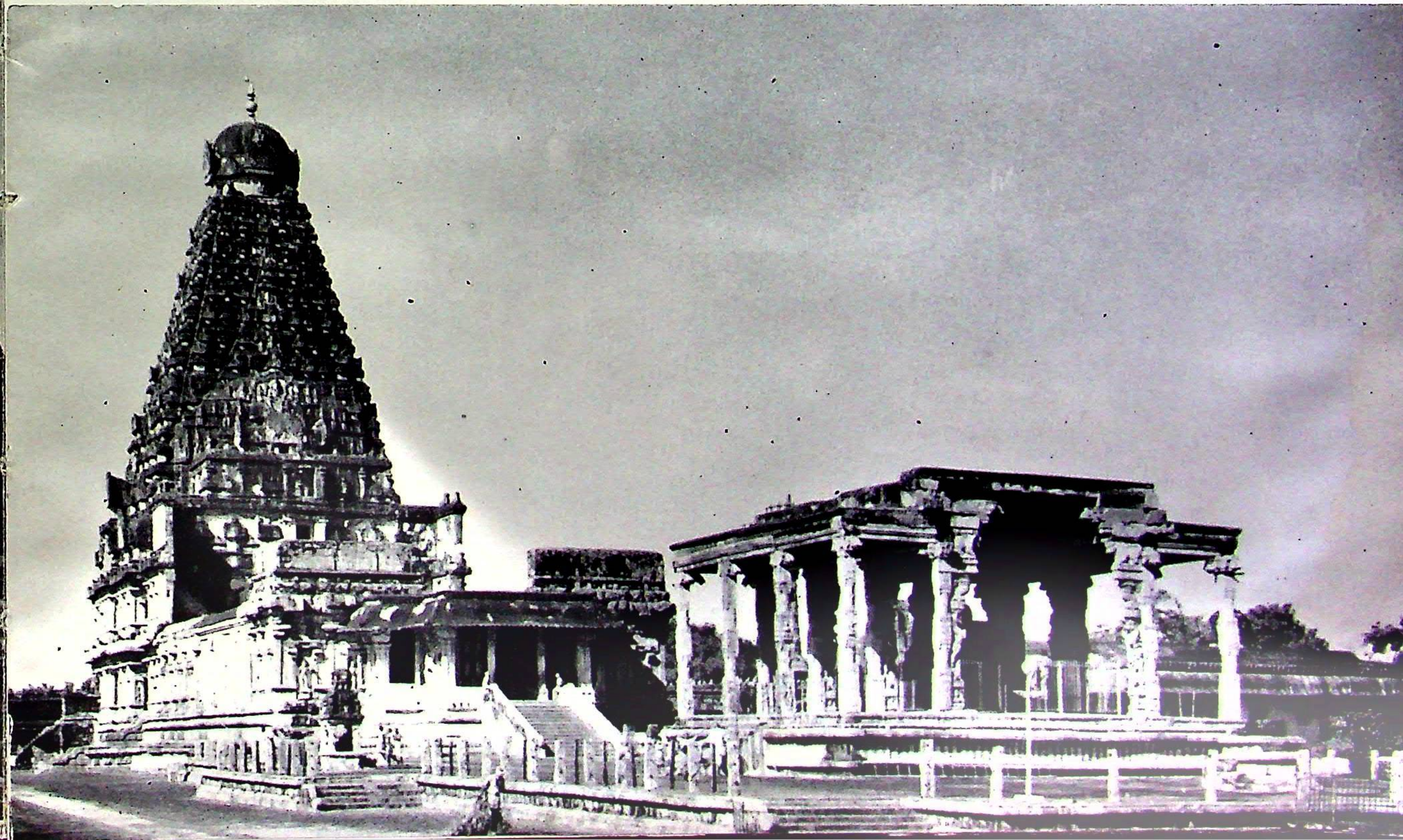


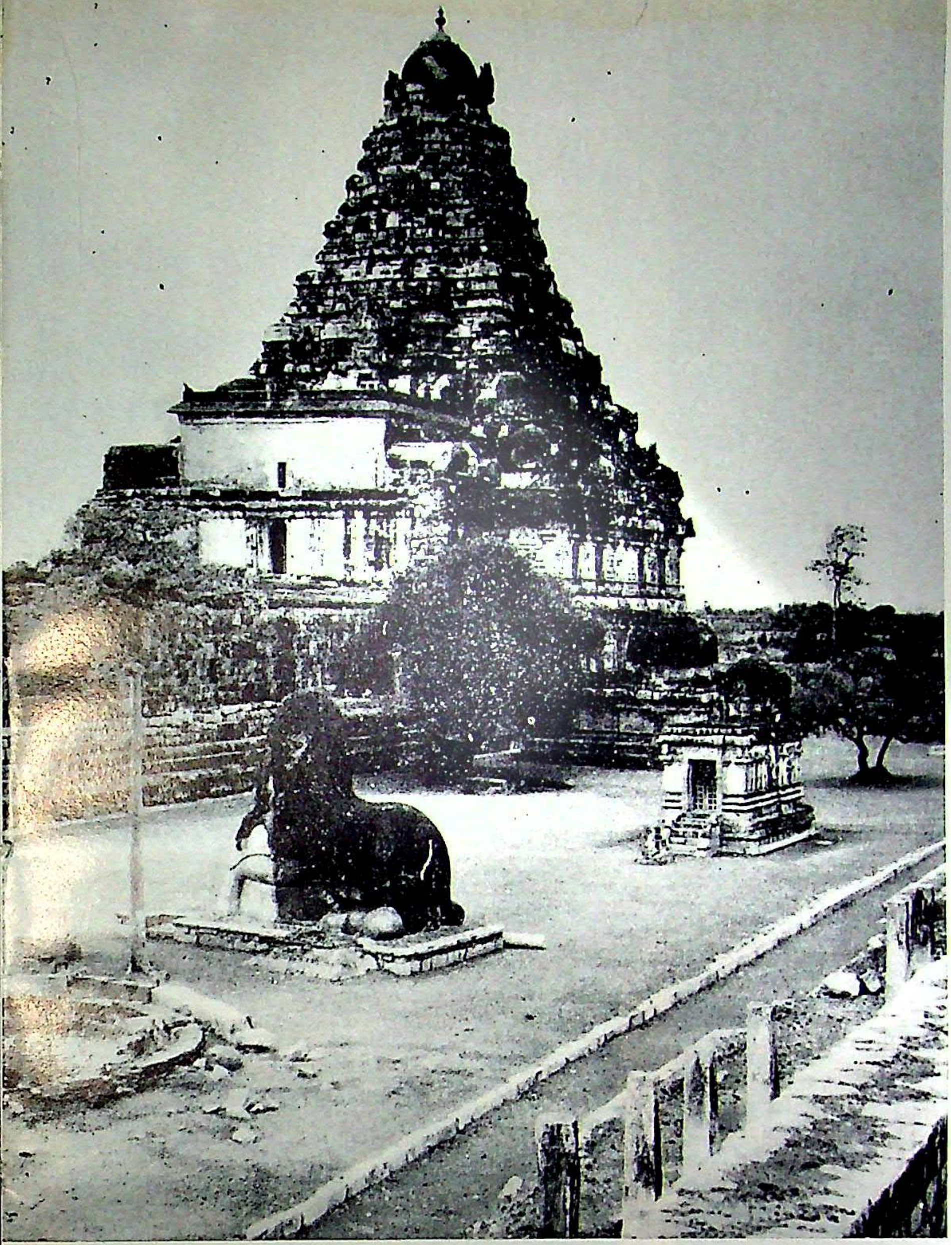
A slightly later version of the fully developed Pallava style is the Vaikuntaperumal Temple at Kanchipuram.

Below is the pillared corridor that runs round the enclosure wall of the Vaikuntaperumal Temple, Kanchipuram



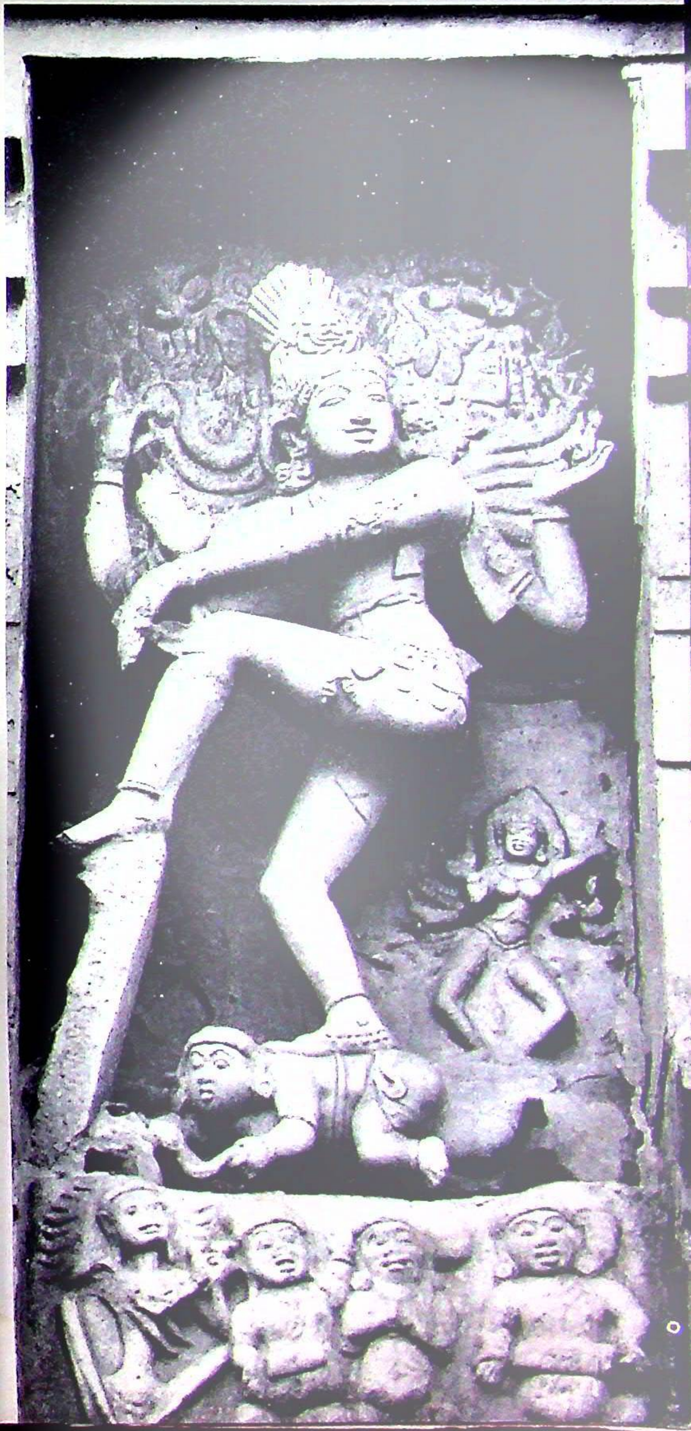
The Brihadeesvara Temple at Tanjore (11th century) is the most magnificent monument of the Cholas. It consists of a towered sanctuary, a vestibule, a pillared hall and a large pavilion in front.





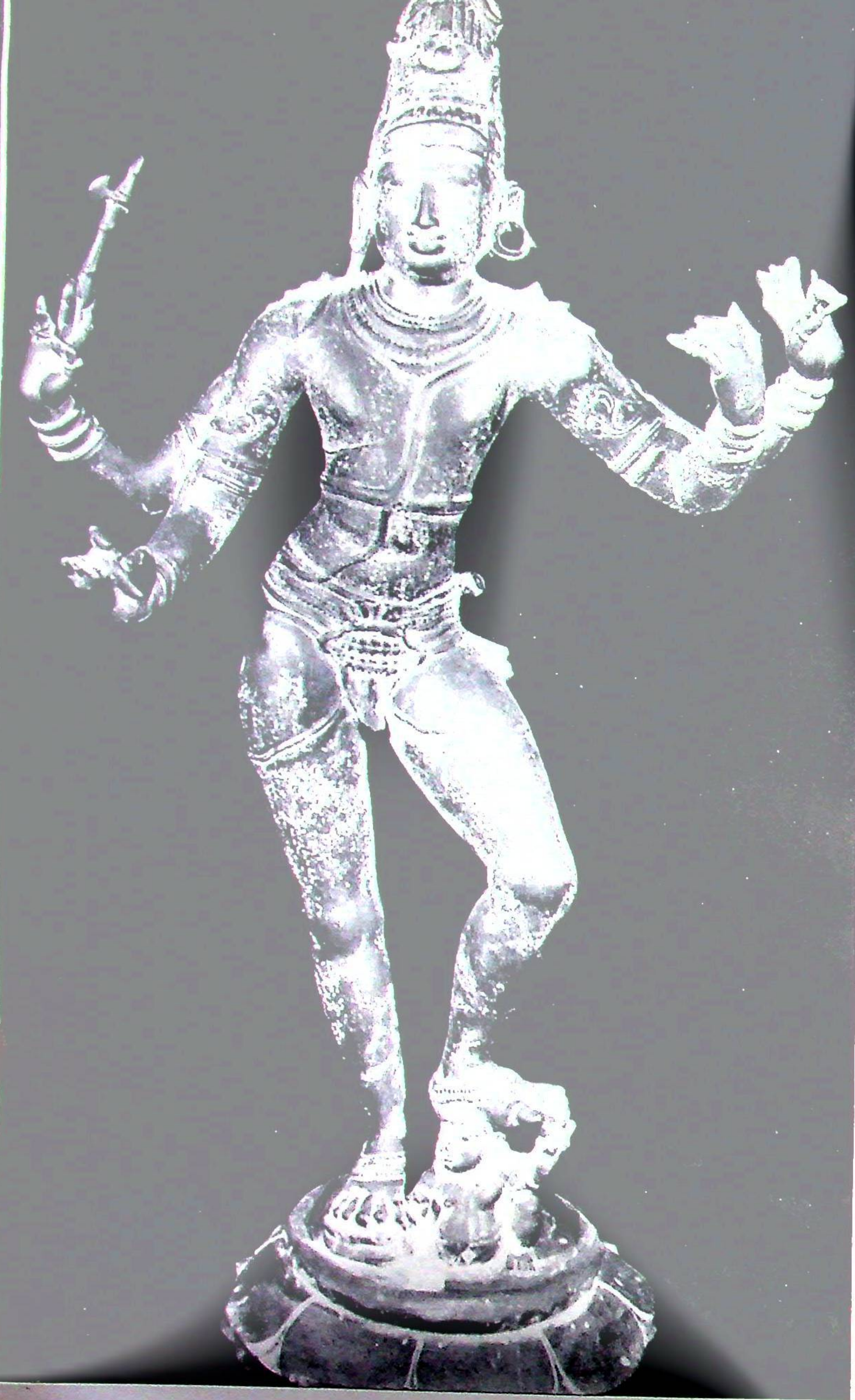
Another great Chola temple is at Gangaikondacholapuram, noted alike for its beautiful tower and its many-pillared hall.

As in architecture so in figure sculpture and bronzes the Chola artists (10-13th centuries) produced masterpieces. Below is a sculptured panel from the Gangaikondacholapuram, depicting Siva as the king of dancers.

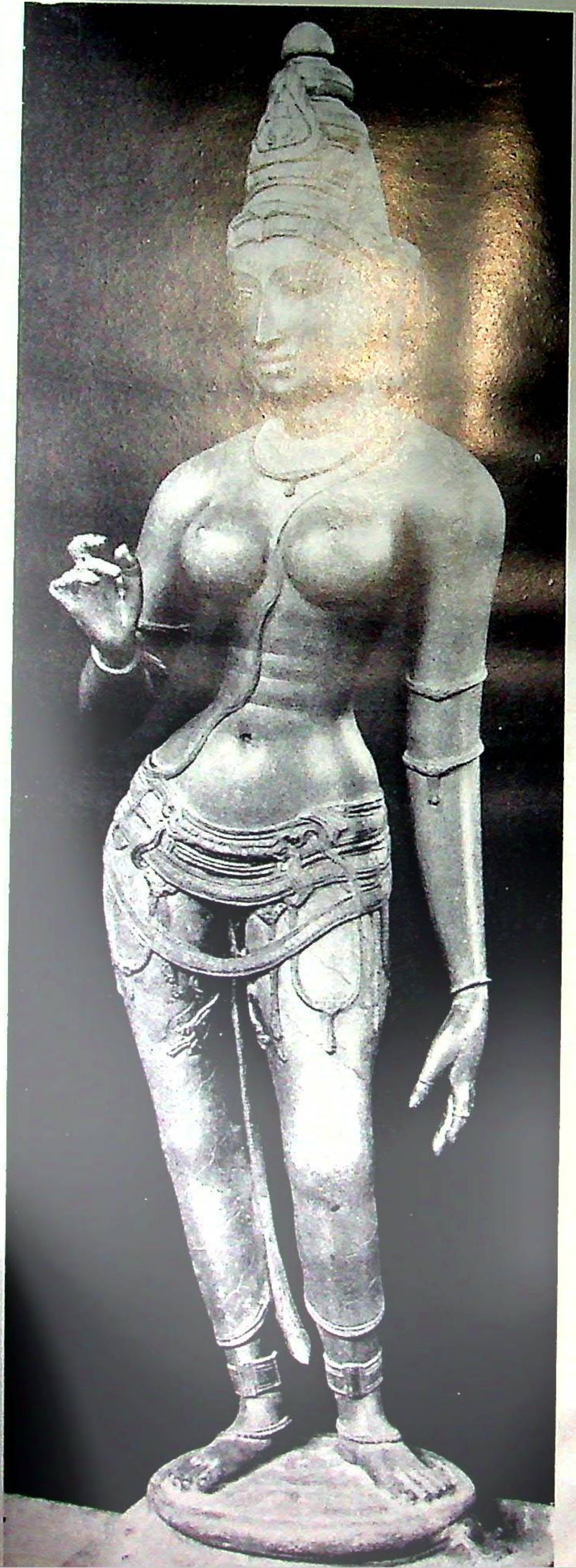


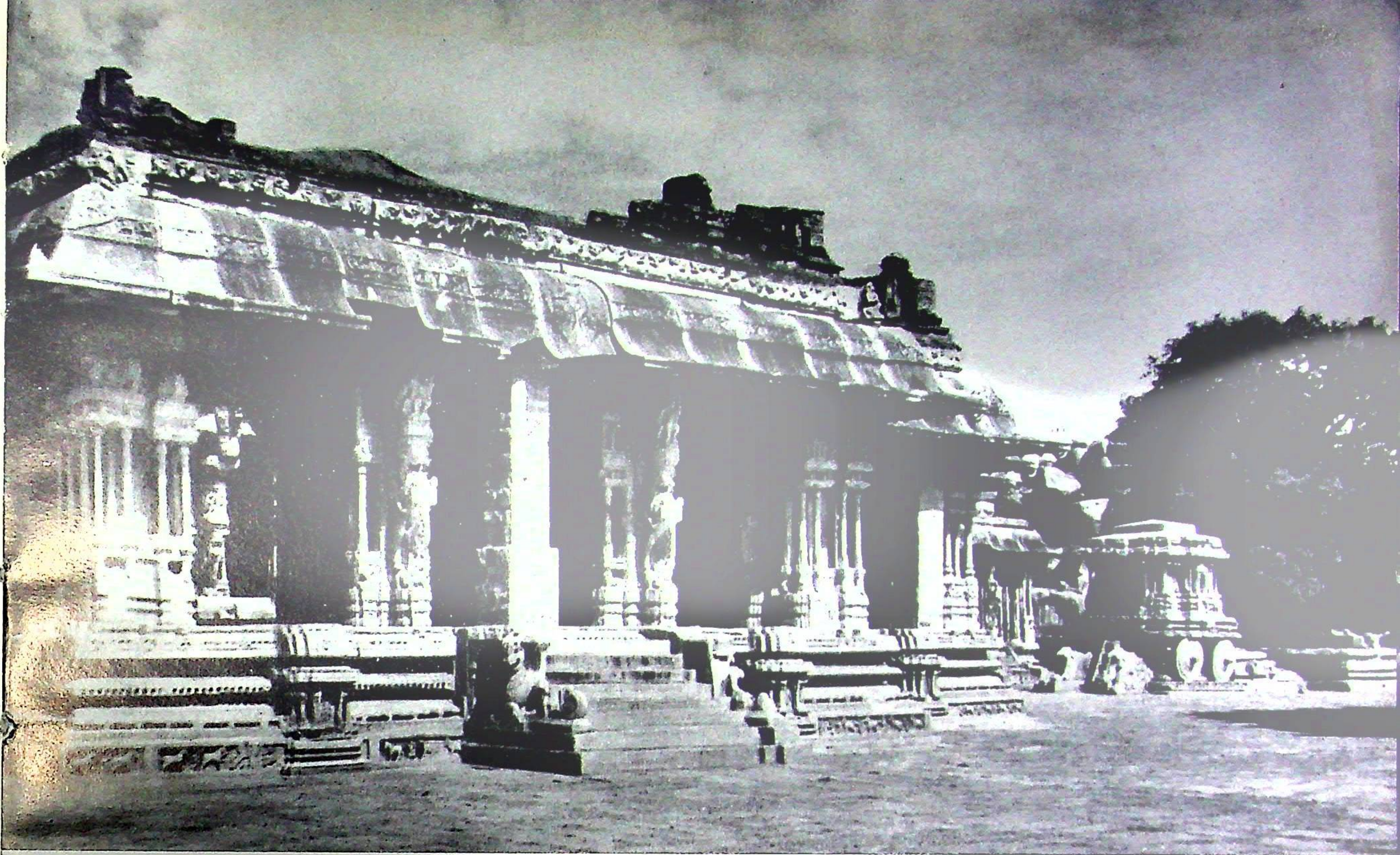
(opp. page)—The most striking part of the Brihadeesvara Temple is its sanctuary tower (*Vimana*) which soars to 190 feet.

Parvati, Tanjore Art Gallery



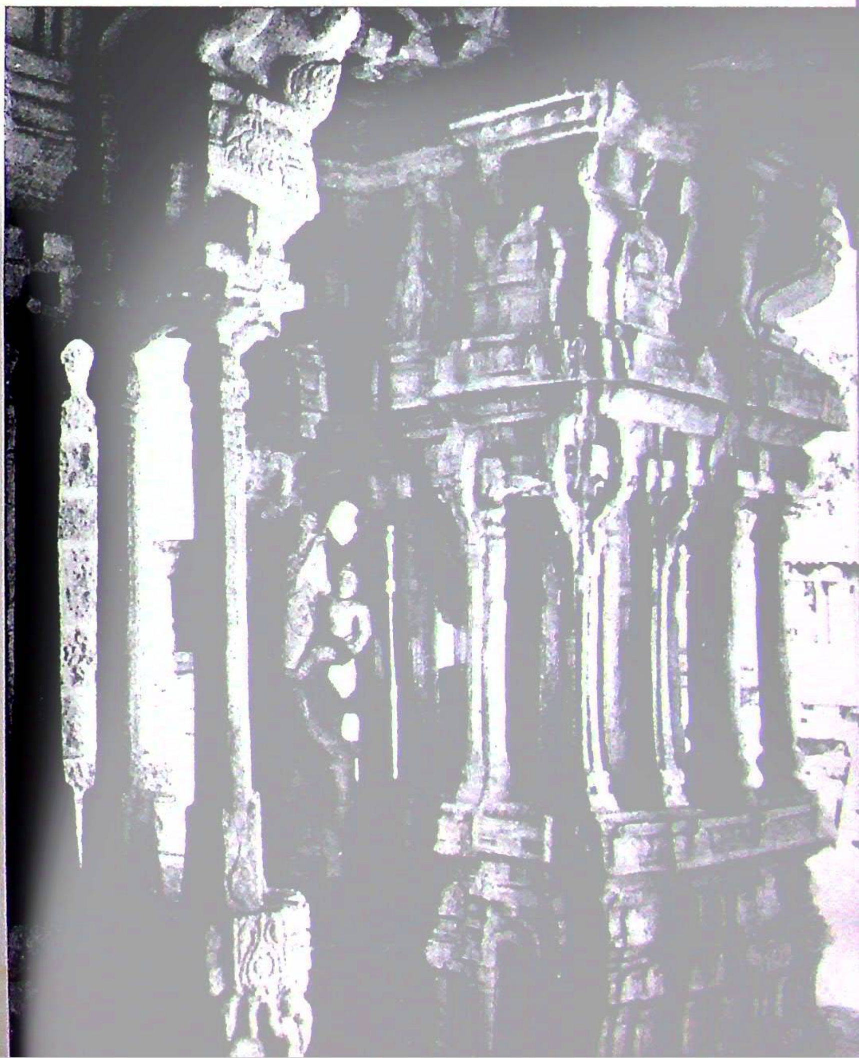
Siva, Tanjore Art Gallery

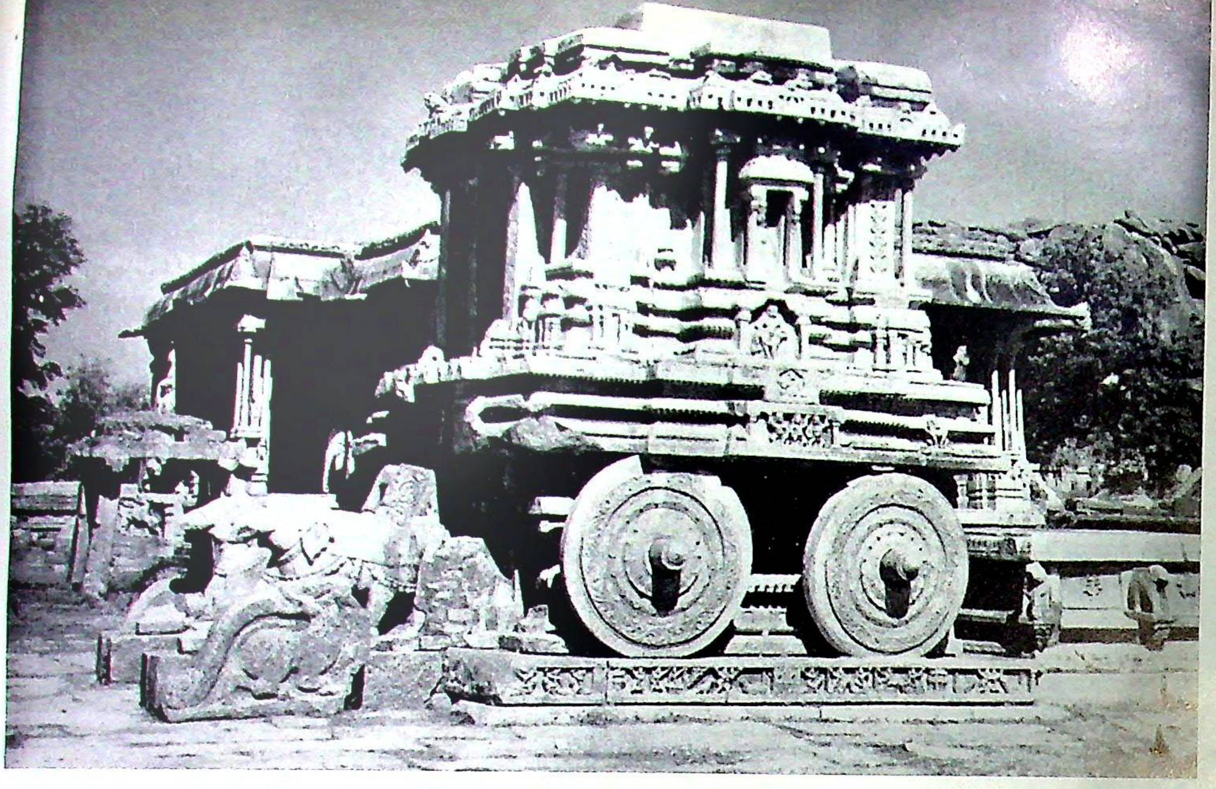




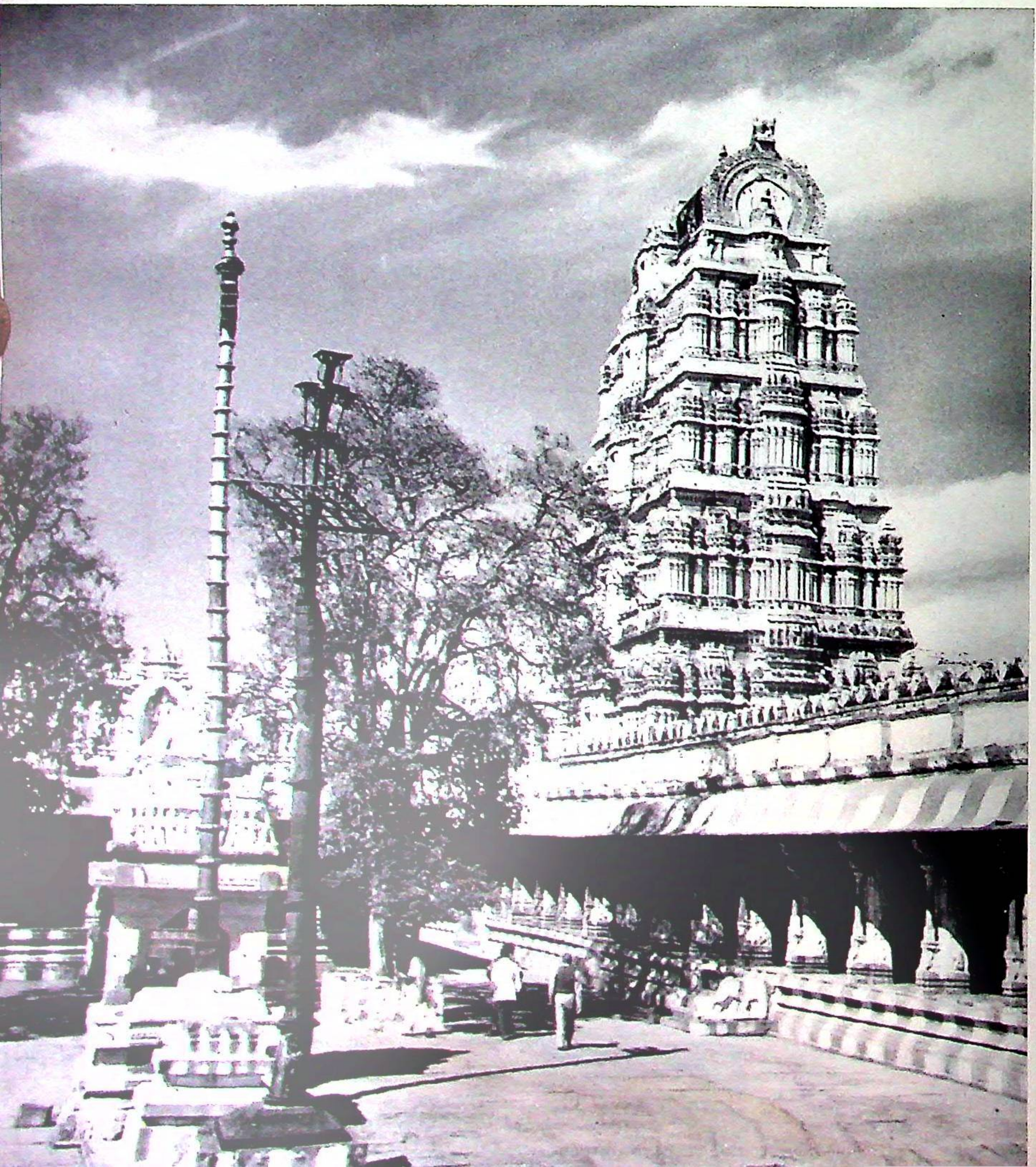
The Vittala Temple at Hampi, built in the 16th century, is the most ornate of the Vijayanagar style of temples. It is known for the florid character of its pillars and the beautiful double-flexured eave. This many-columned portico of the Vittala Temple has 56 pillars each of which has been carved out of a monolith.

Each pier (right) takes the form of a cluster of delicately carved pillars or a highly complicated statuary with human figures, rearing animals or gods.



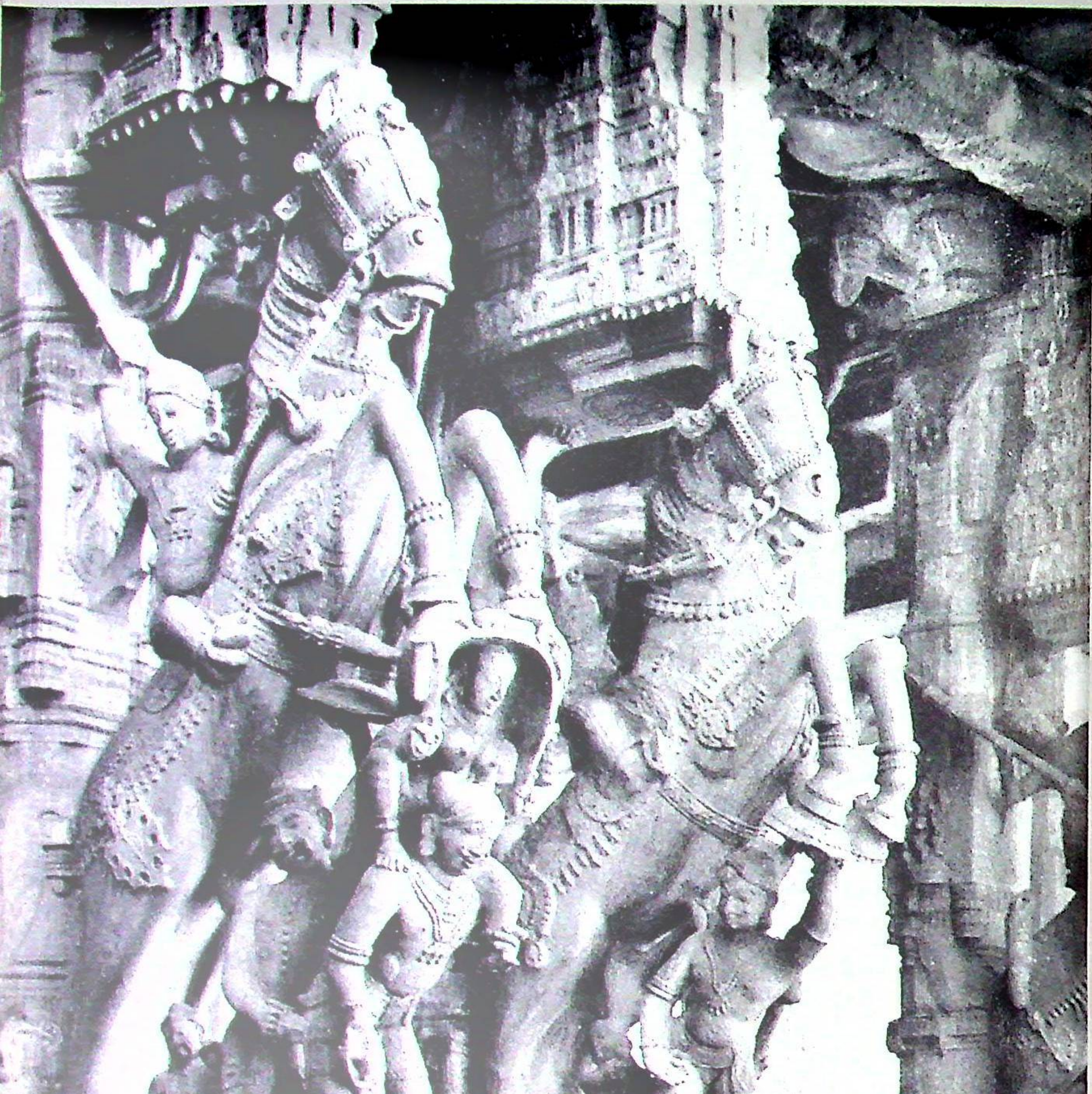


In the courtyard of the Vittala Temple is an exquisitely carved lithic model of a temple car without a tower.

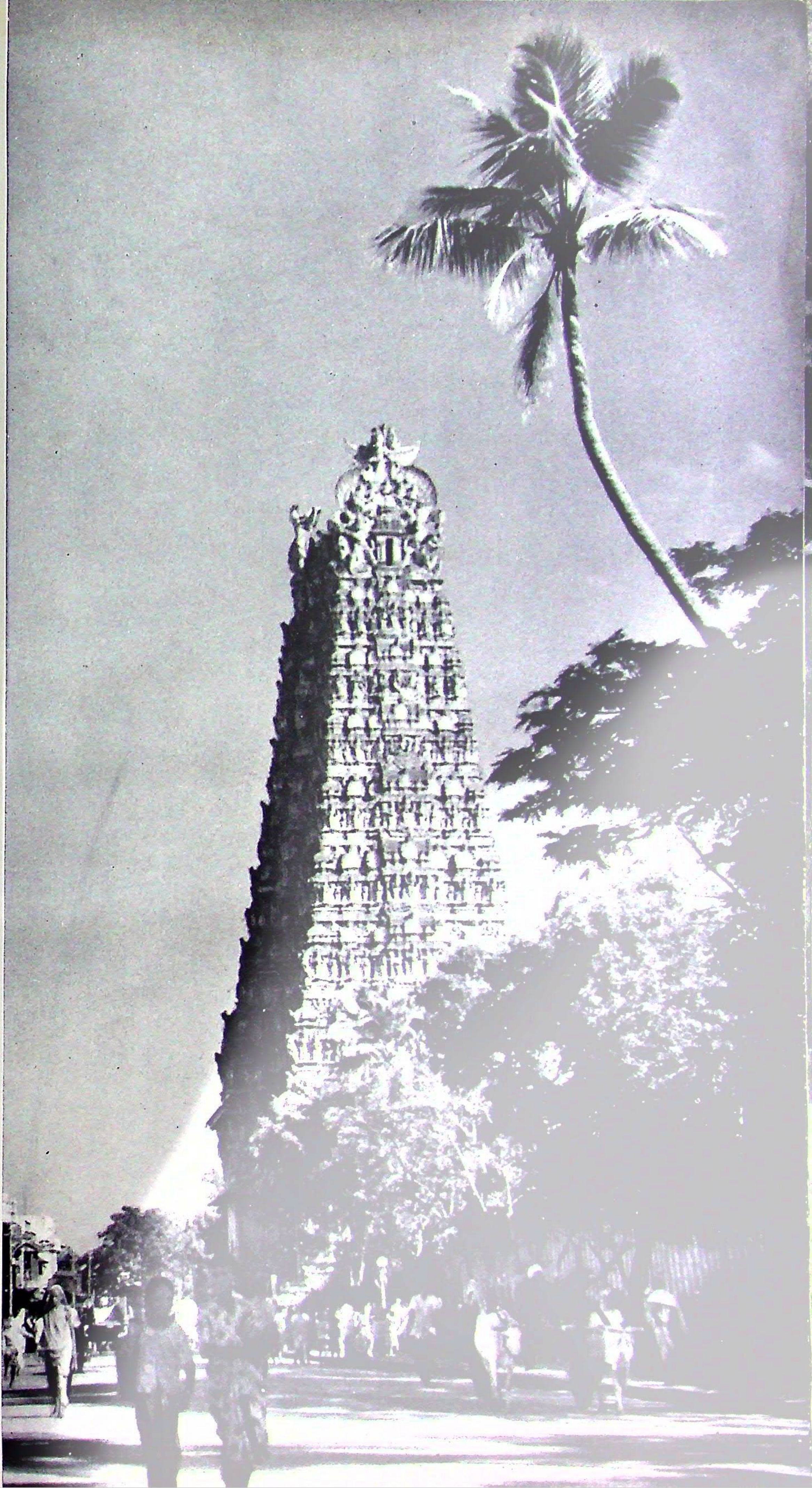


Among the other great temples at Hampi is this Pampapati Temple, notable for its pillared hall and tower.

(opp. page)—The largest Dravidian temple complex is the Ranganatha Temple at Srirangam which is enclosed within seven concentric walls, each pierced by an imposing towered gateway. Photograph is of one of the gateways.



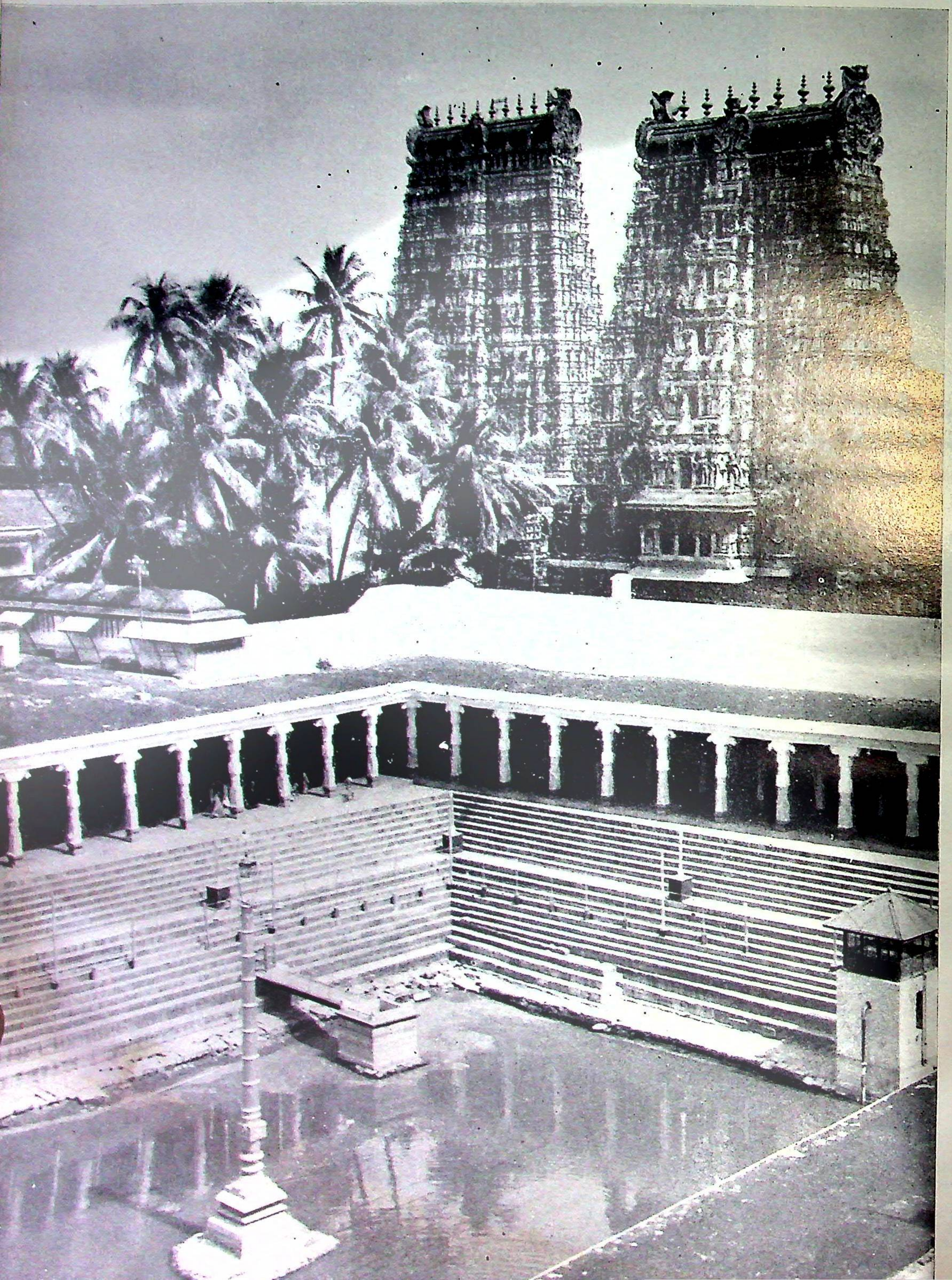
Belonging to the Vijayanagar style is the "Horse Court" of the Ranganatha Temple at Srirangam where we see the classical rearing horse motif employed extravagantly.

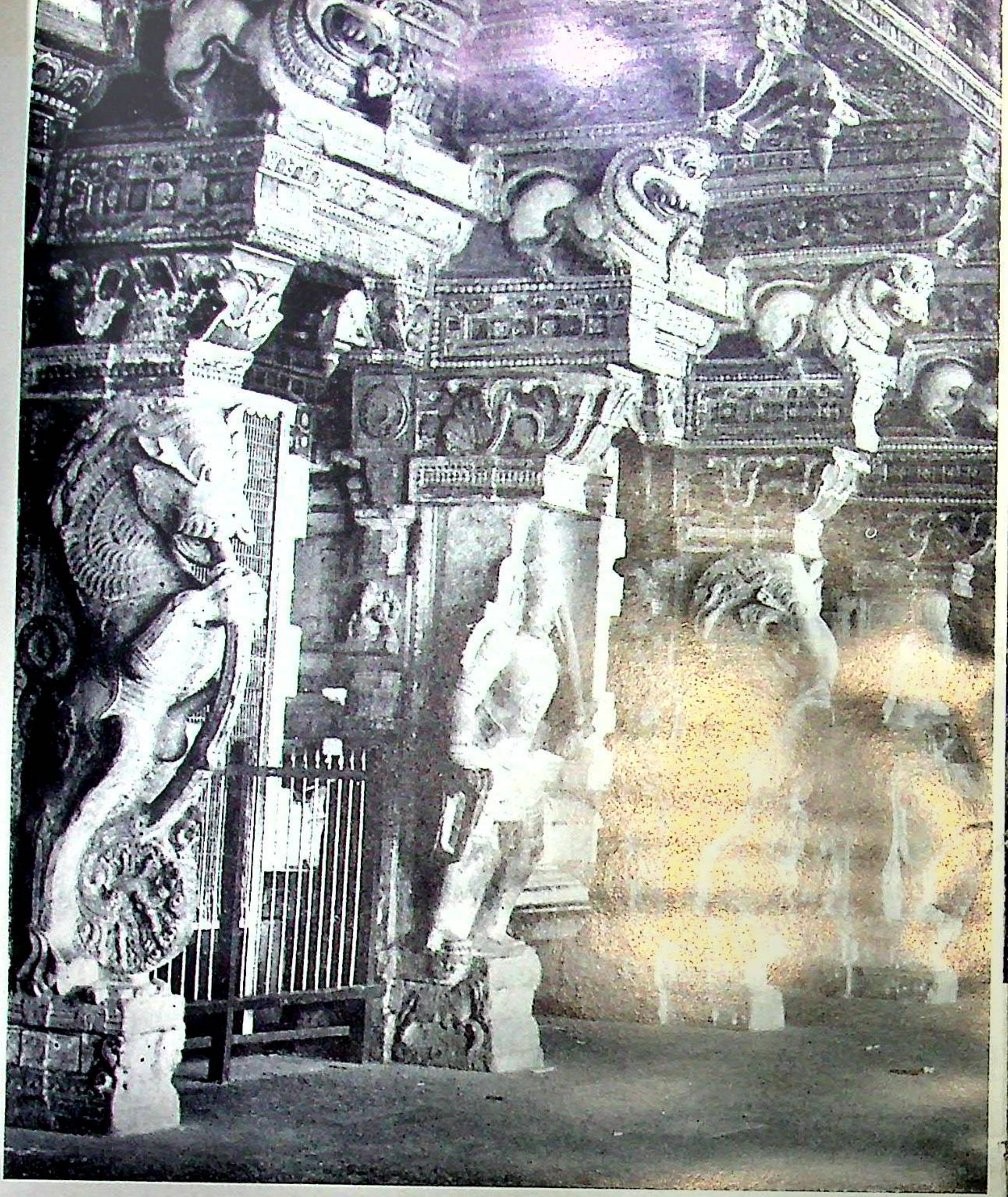


In the 17th century the Dravidian temple developed into a vast complex of structures with imposing gateways and towers. A view of the Meenakshi Temple gateway at Madurai.

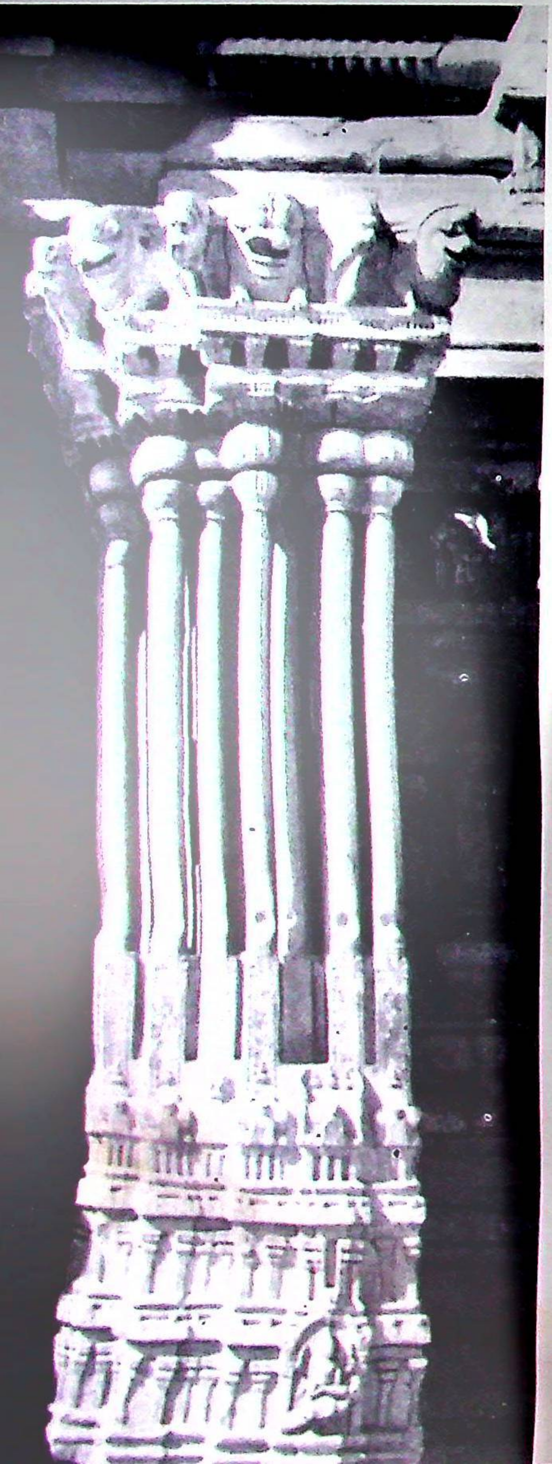
It is to the Madurai phase of architecture (eighteenth century) that the Dravidian style owes its fully evolved *gopuram*. The Madurai temple has in all eleven of these towers which are of considerable artistic merit. This impressive view of the Madurai temple is from the eastern *gopuram*. In the foreground is the Pond of Golden Lilies.

(opp. page)—A *gopuram* of the Meenakshi Temple. Its lofty base and concave curves give it a soaring quality while the surface is turned into one pulsating mass of plastic deities and semi-divine beings.

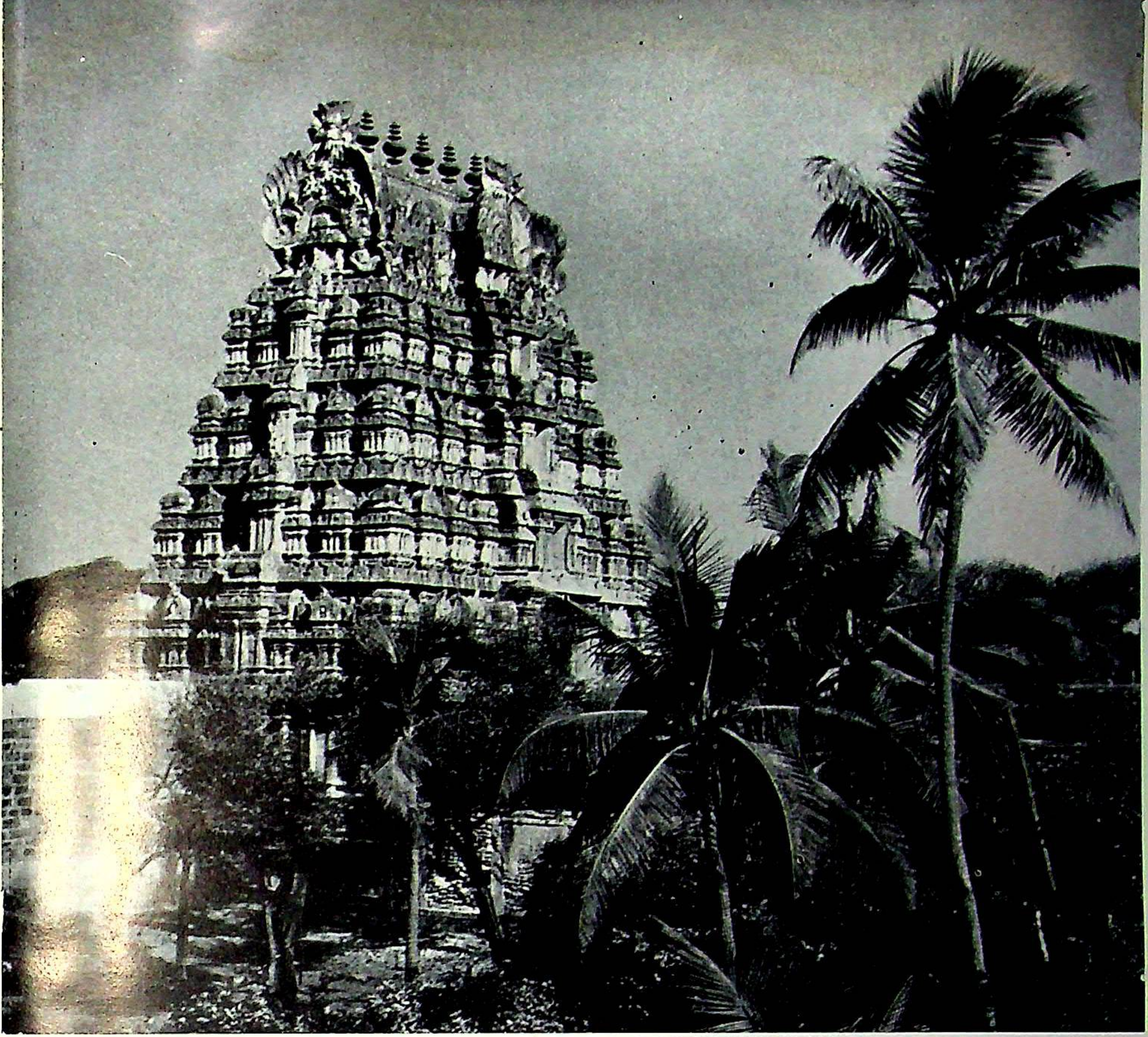




The pillars of the Madurai temple (of which there are over 1,000) are an interesting feature of the later Dravidian style. The most common is the rampant dragon type. Others include life-size figures of deities, musicians and warriors.

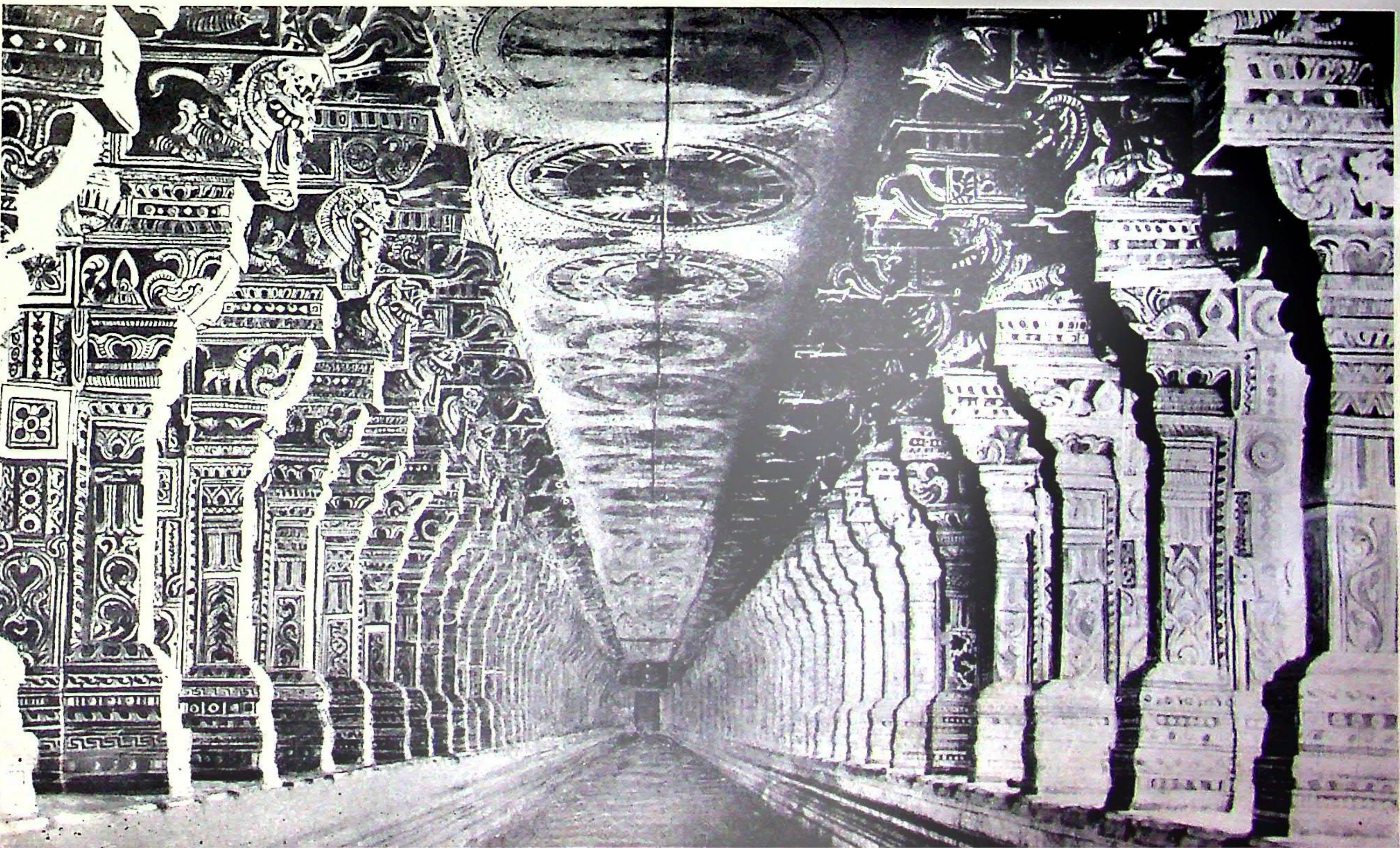


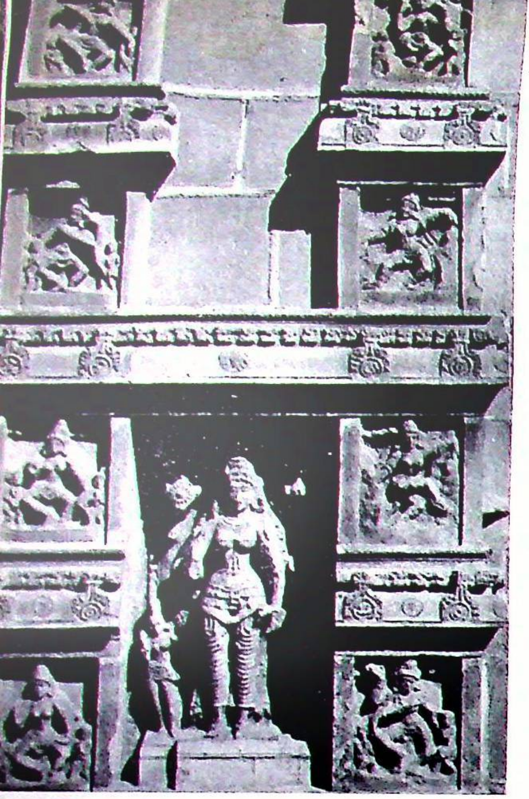
Among the many interesting piers is this monolithic "musical pillar". Each of the shafts in this composite pillar when struck with a rod yields a distinct musical note.

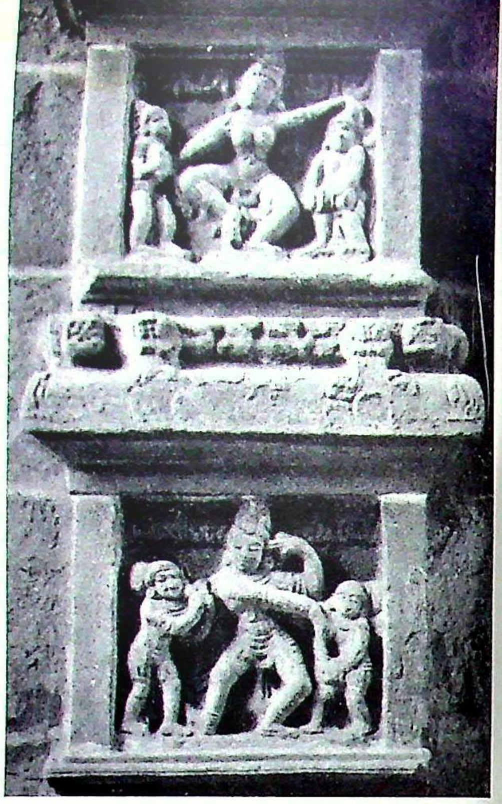


A later example of the Dravidian style is the Rameswaram temple which consists of two shrines enclosed in three concentric walls.

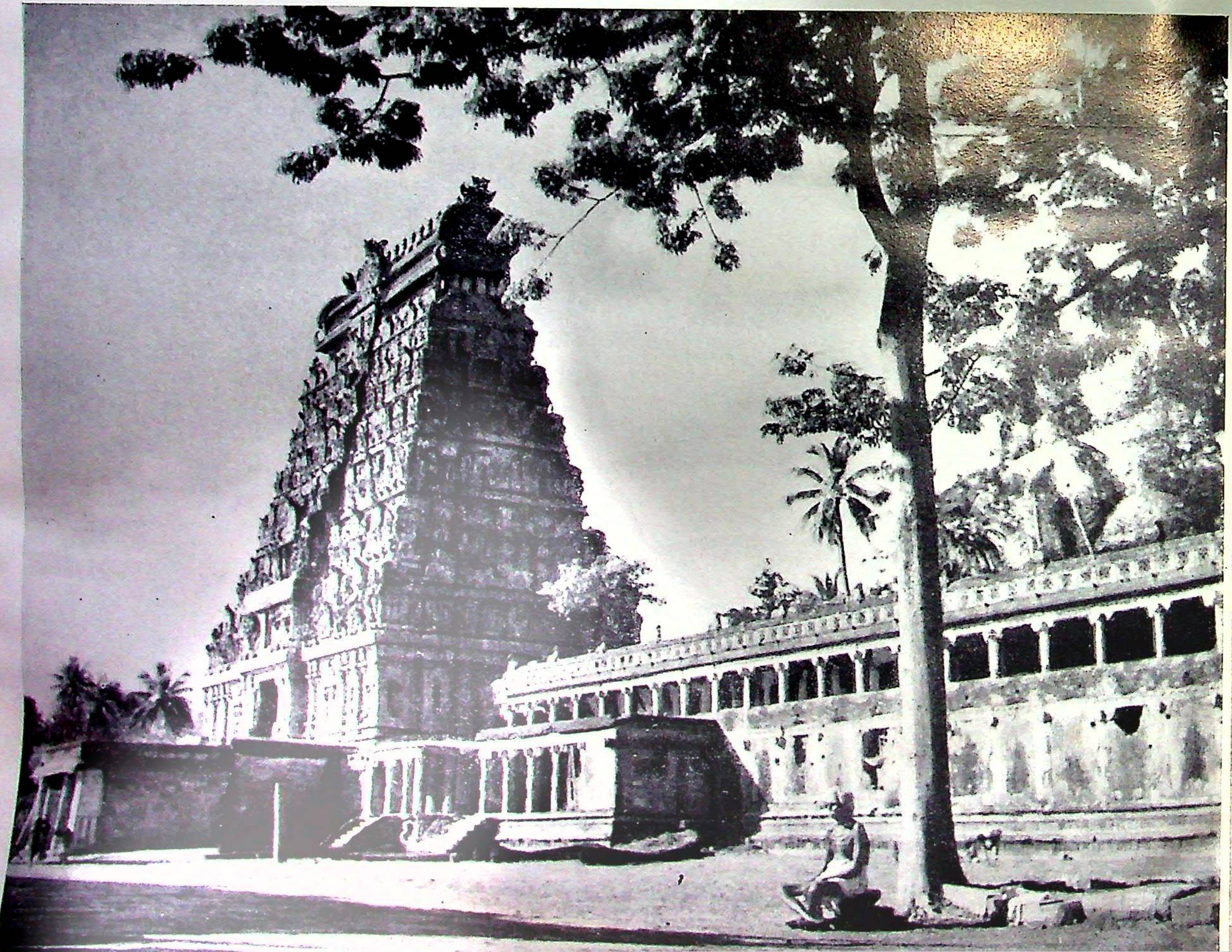
The grandest part of the Rameswaram temple is its 4,000-ft. pillared corridor. Each pillar is a 12-ft. monolith and is elegantly designed.



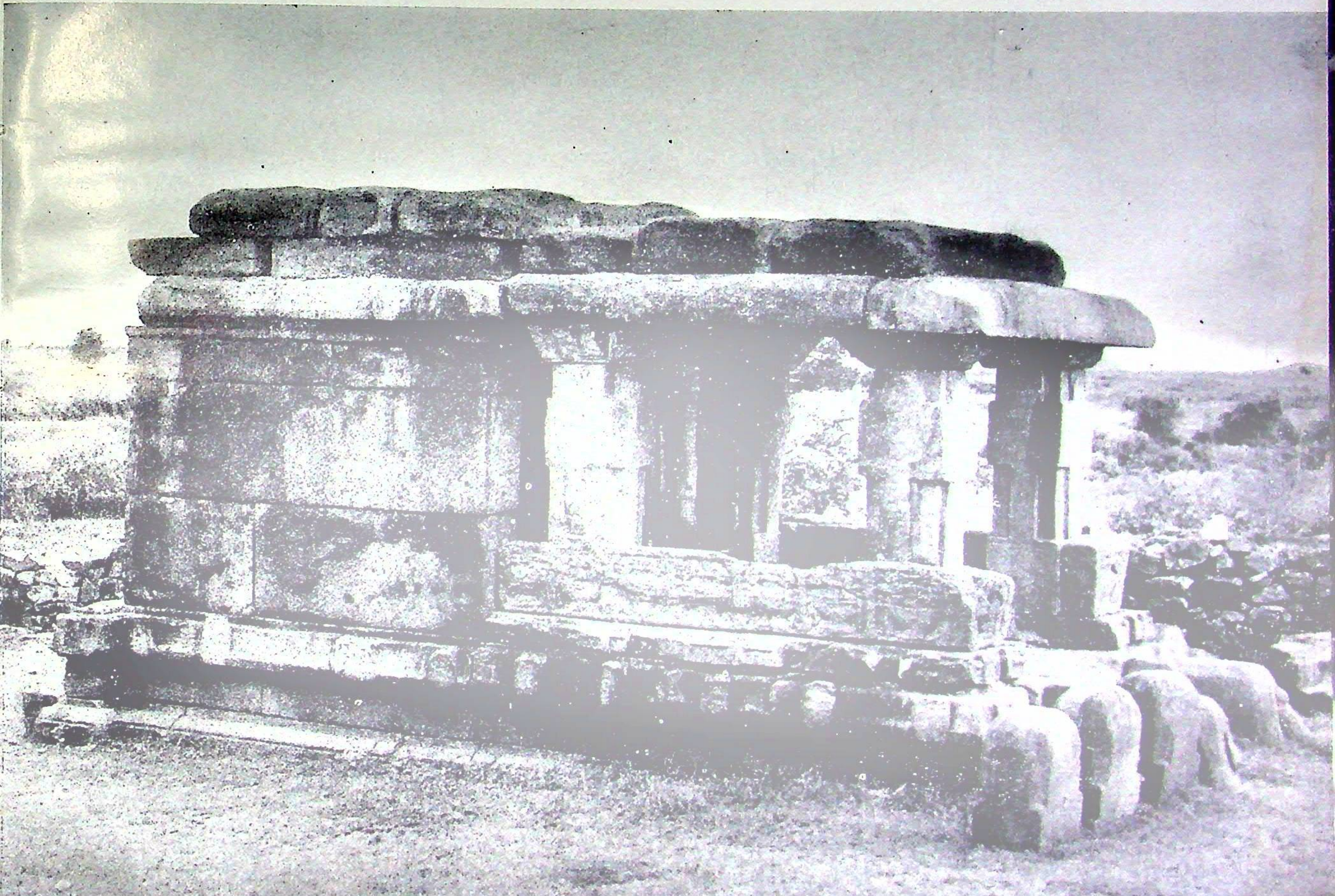


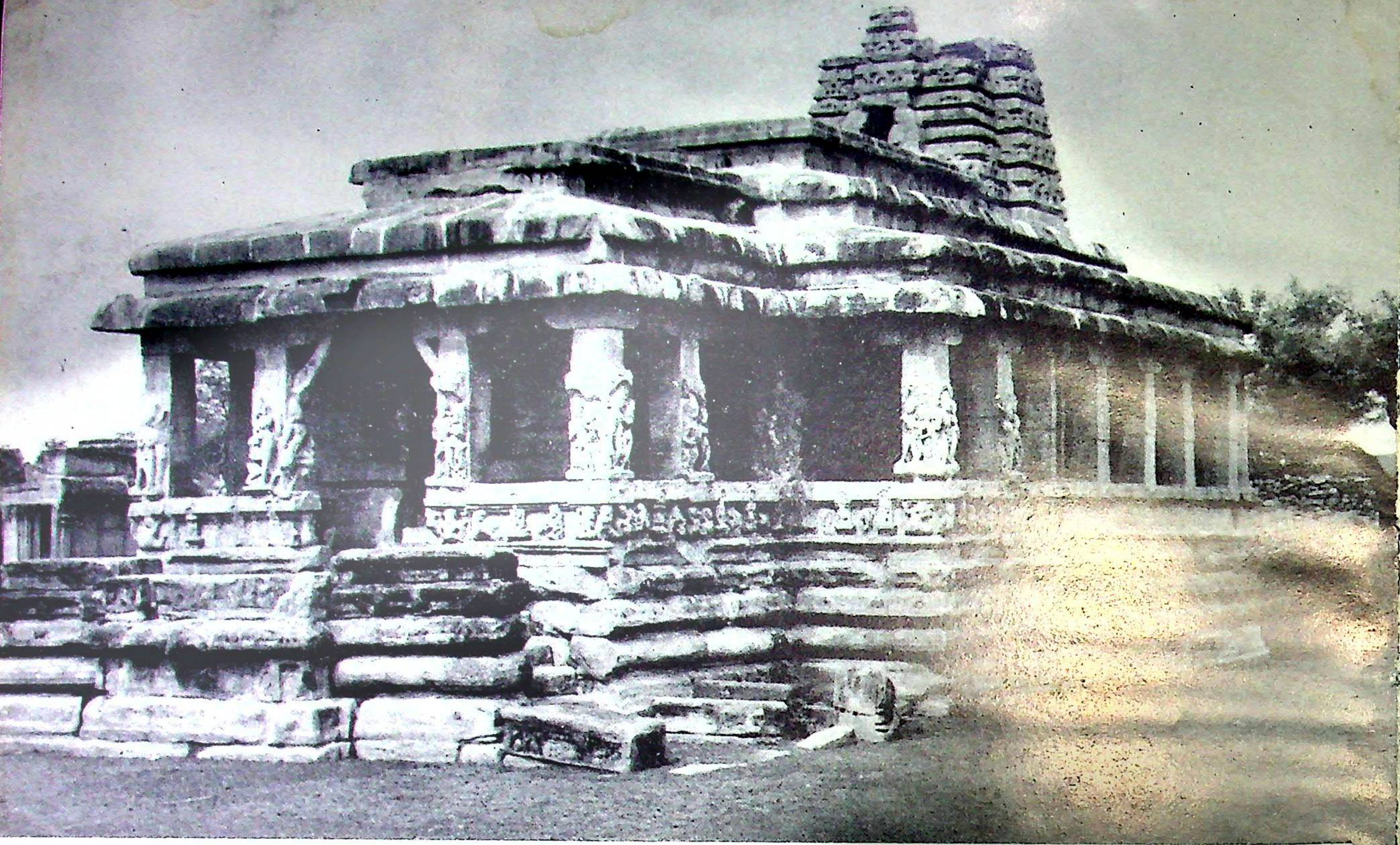


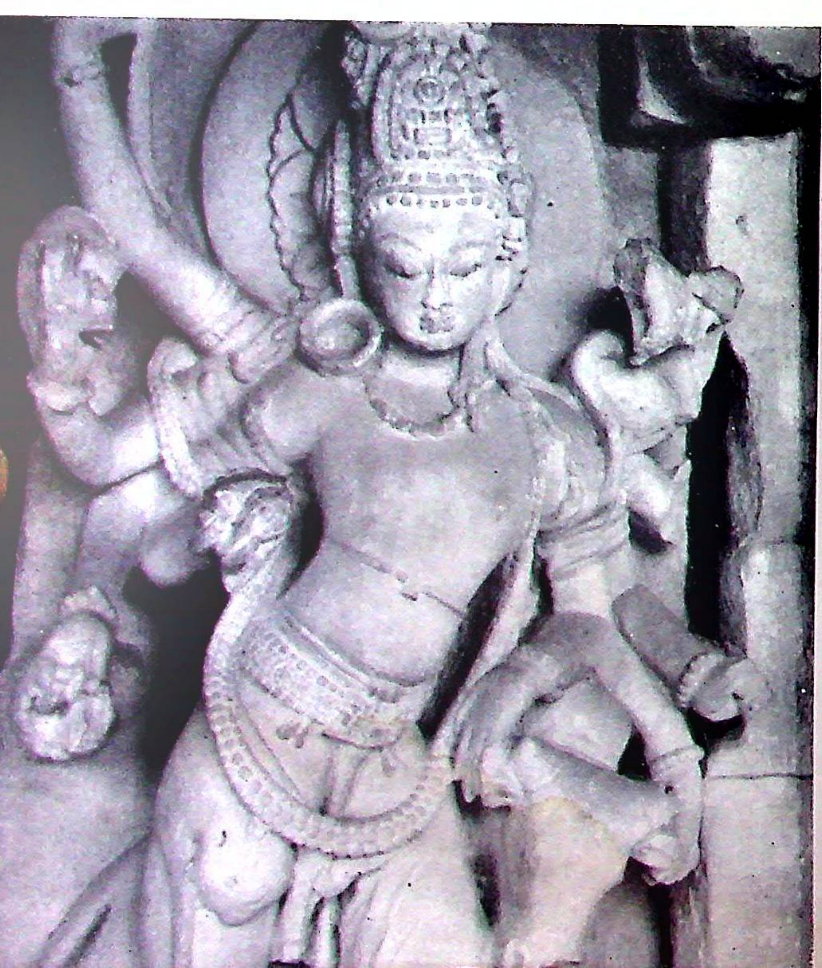
There are many other well-known Dravidian temples noted for their size and carvings. The Nataraja Temple at Chidambaram (below) is a complex of many structures built at various times. The Nritya Sabha or dance hall of the temple, built to resemble a chariot, has exquisitely carved panels, illustrating mostly dance poses.



The Chalukyan style which developed in the mid-western region of South India evolved from very simple beginnings. The flat-roofed early fifth-century shrine at Aihole with its pillared porch is a rare surviving example.

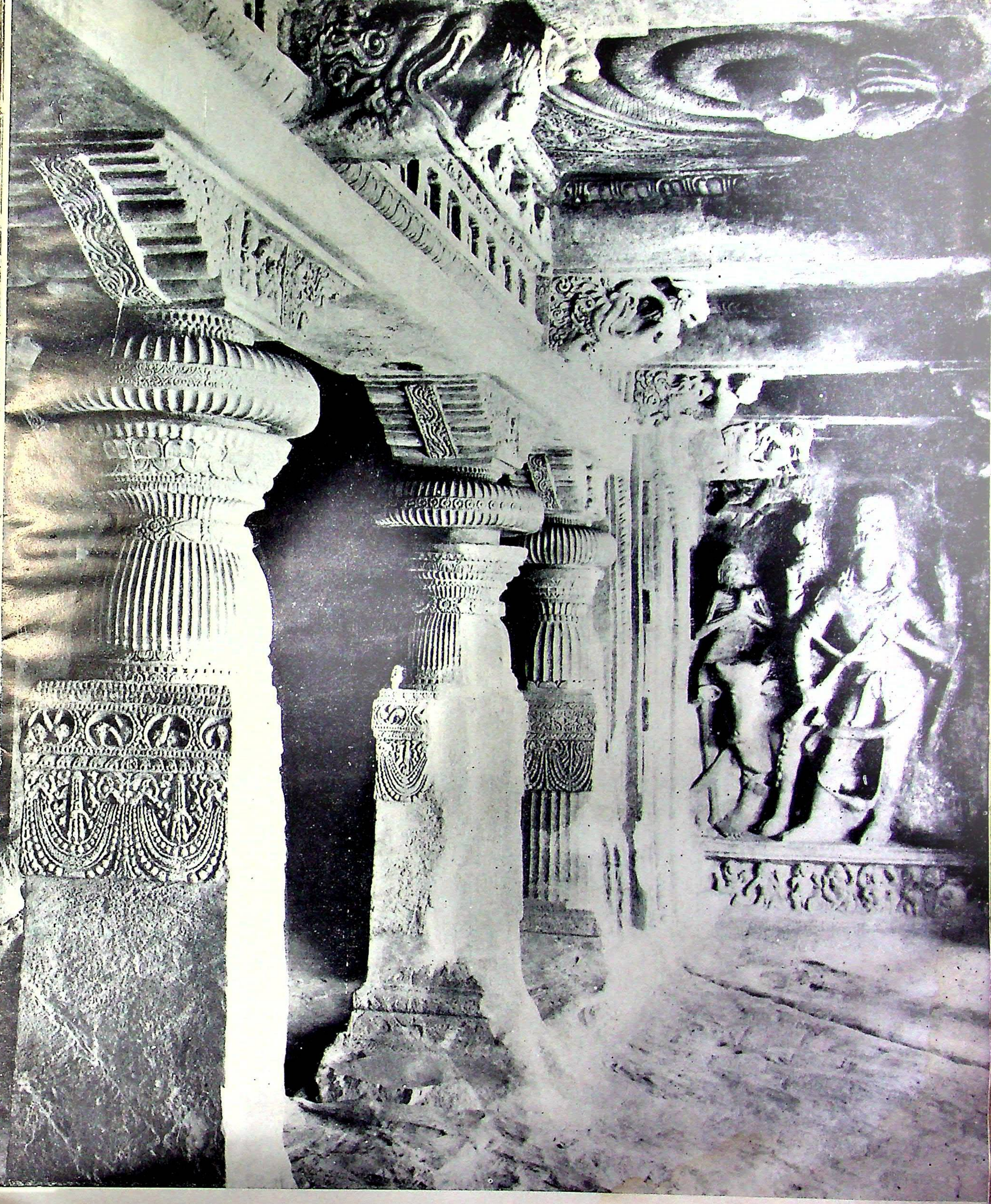




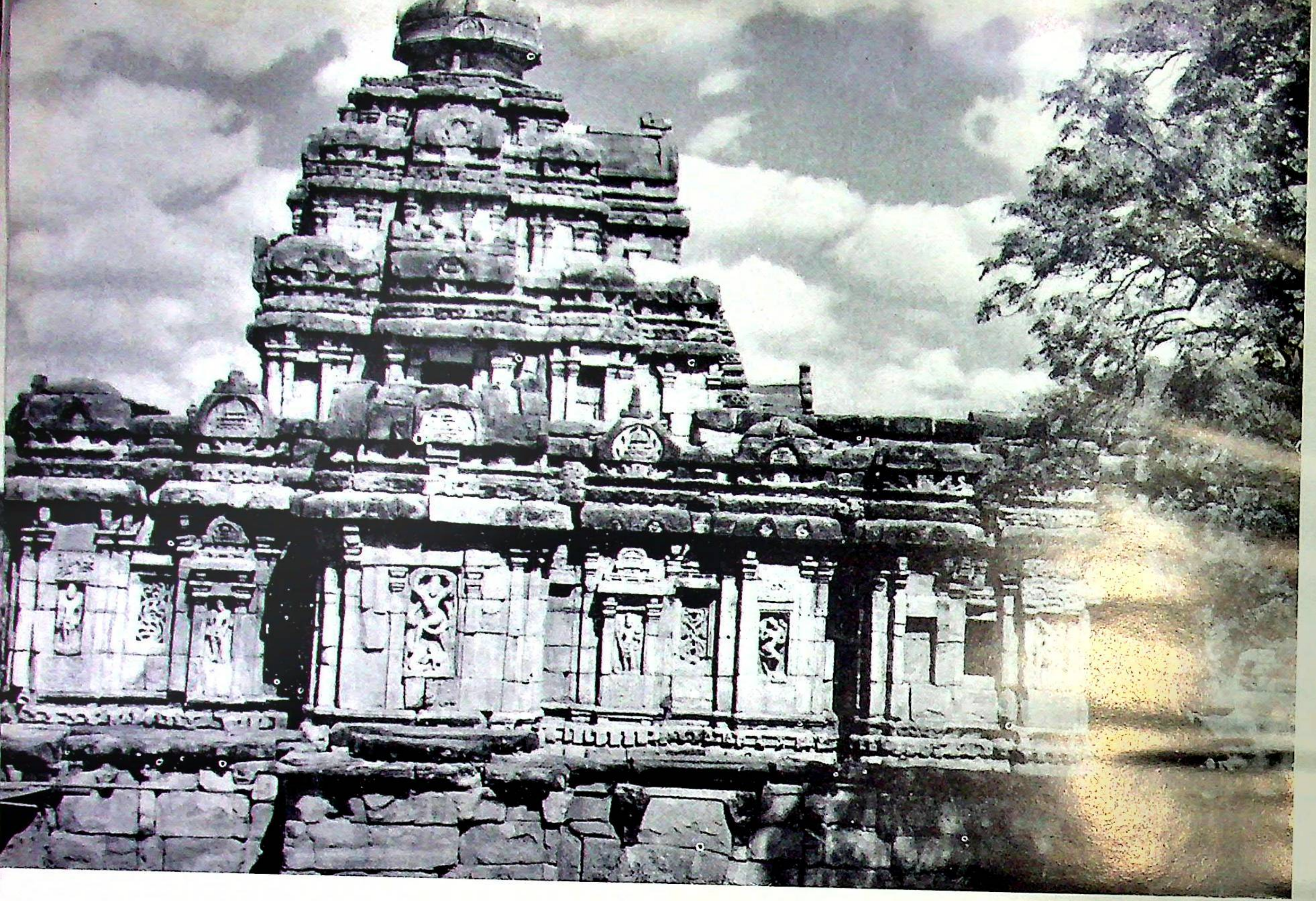


Aihole, in the Bijapur district of Mysore State, cradled the Chalukyan style as Mahabalipuram did the Dravidian. The temple of Durga is interesting as a Brahmanical adaptation of the architecture of a Buddhist Chaitya with an apsidal end. The curvilinear tower on the shrine seems an anachronistic superimposition.

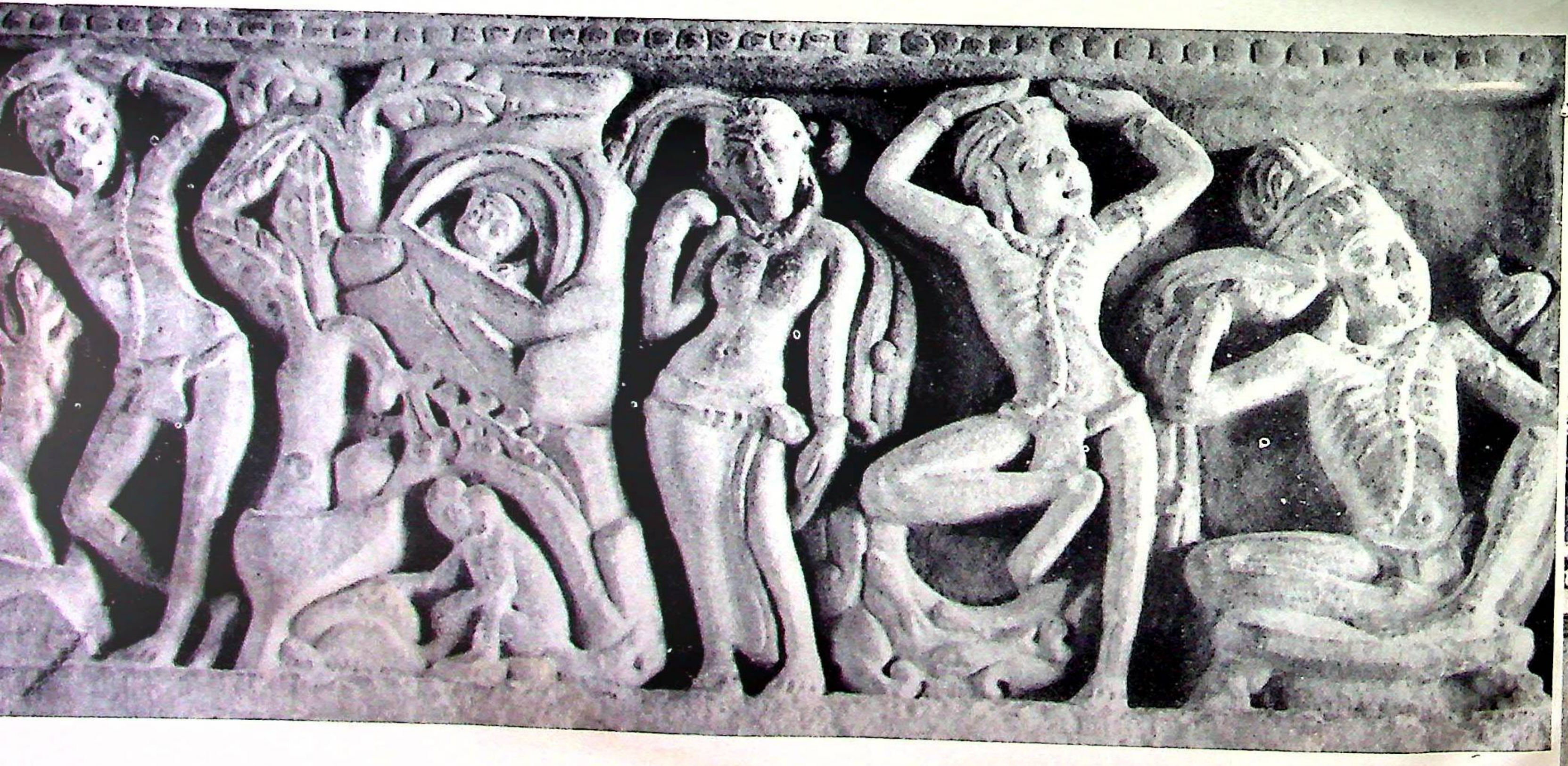
The Durga Temple is notable for its excellent sculptured panels like this one. Siva is reclining on his bull-mount.

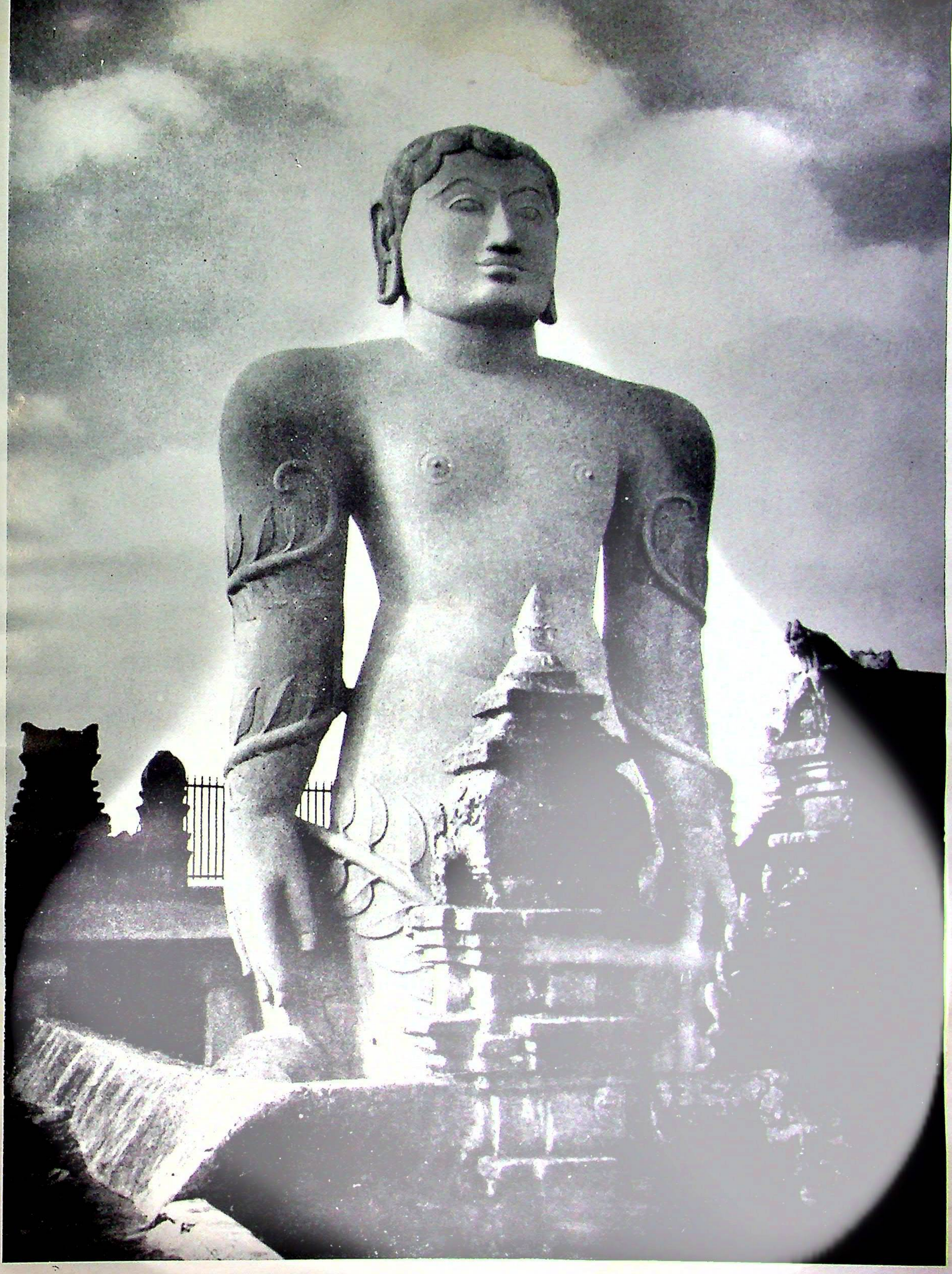


Badami and Pattadakal are two other villages near Aihole where early Chalukyan architecture is in evidence. In Badami there is a group of rock-cut pillared halls (7th century) with beautiful panels of sculpture. This shows the interior of Cave No. 1.

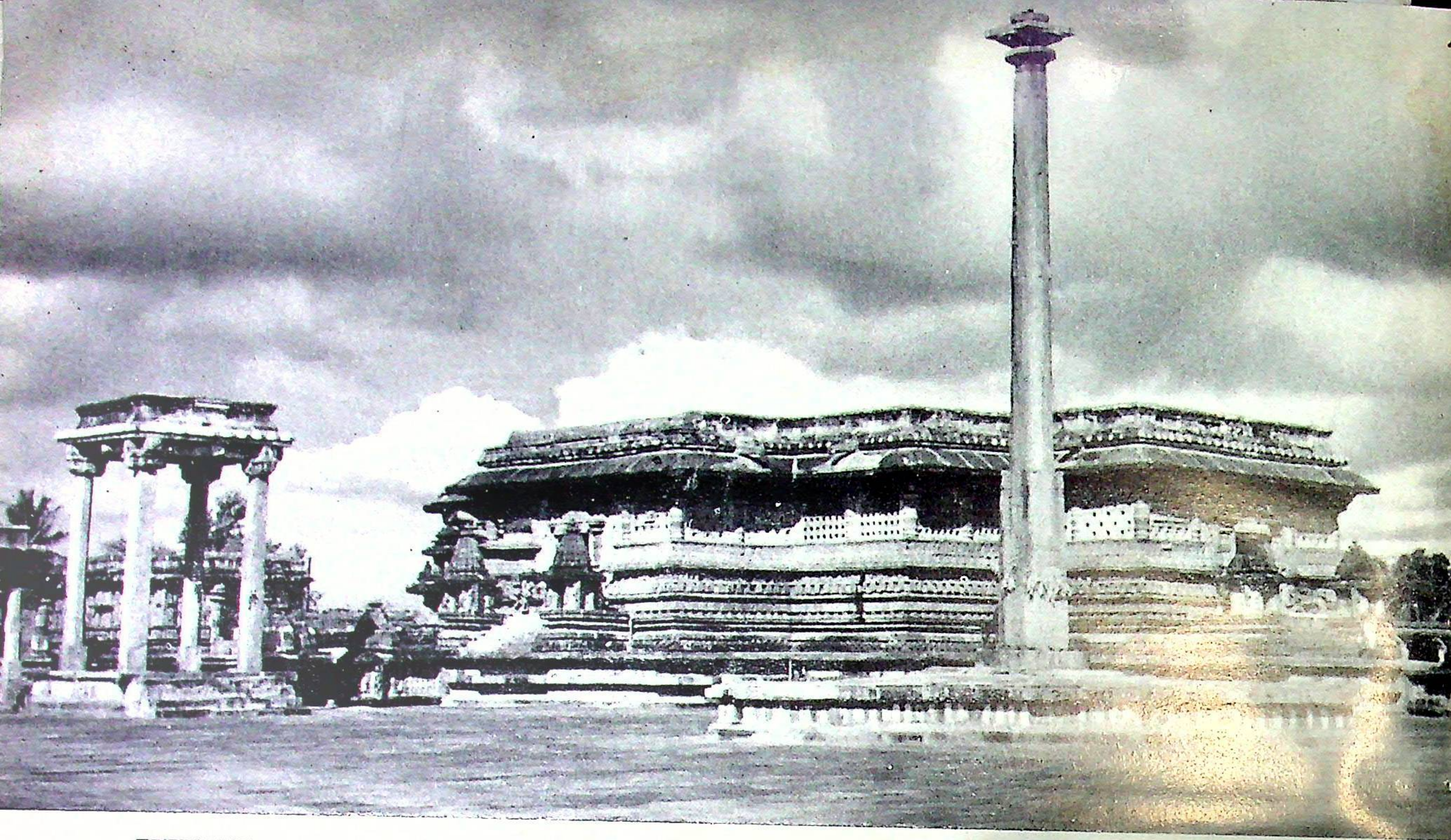


In the 7th and 8th centuries both the southern and northern styles exercised their influence. This temple of Mallikarjuna at Pattadakal (about 750 A. D.) bears clear evidence of Dravidian influence. The remarkable sculpture (below) from a pillar of the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal shows that its artists were no mere imitators.

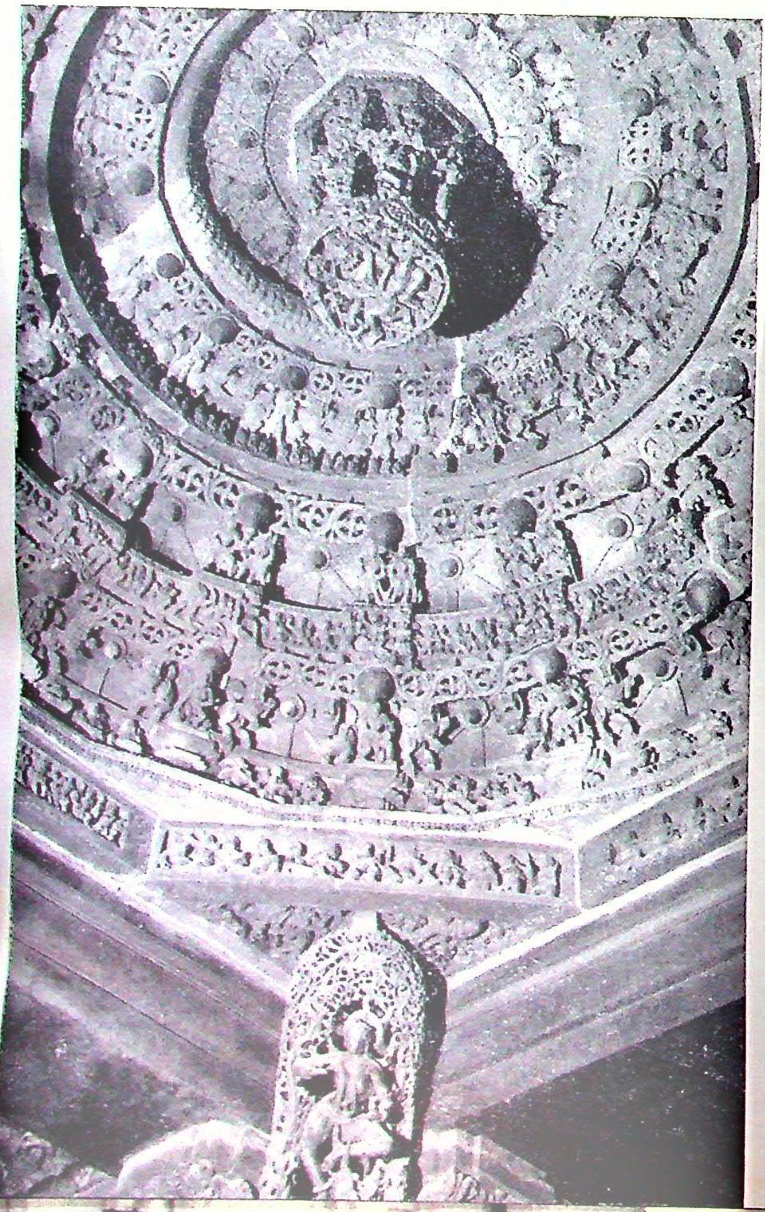




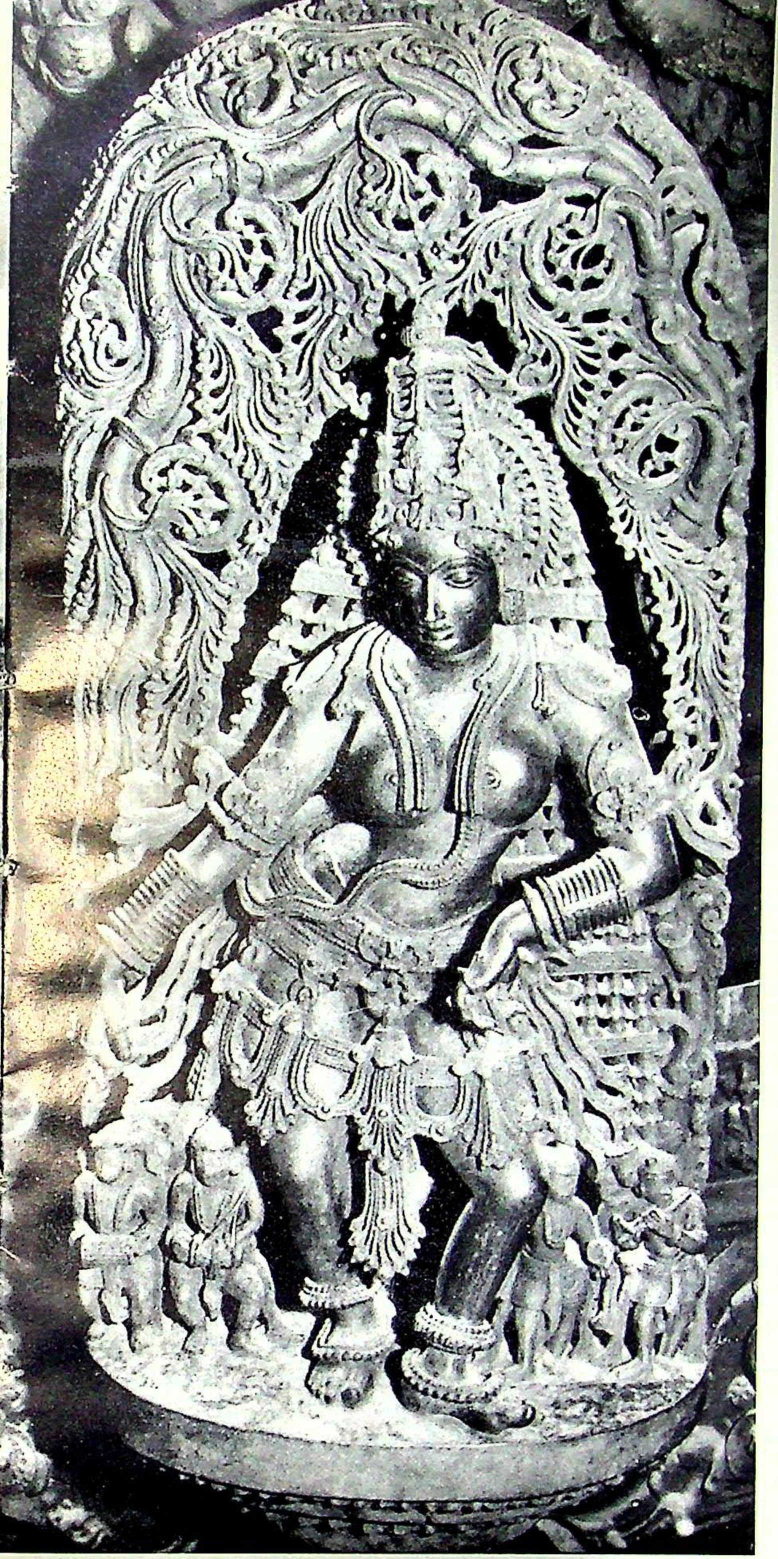
Southern Mysore saw a spurt of religious architecture in the 10th century under the local Jain rulers. They made themselves immortal by building a group of monuments at Sravanabelgola. On one of the two hills at this place stands the colossus of the Jain saint Gomata, 56 feet in height.

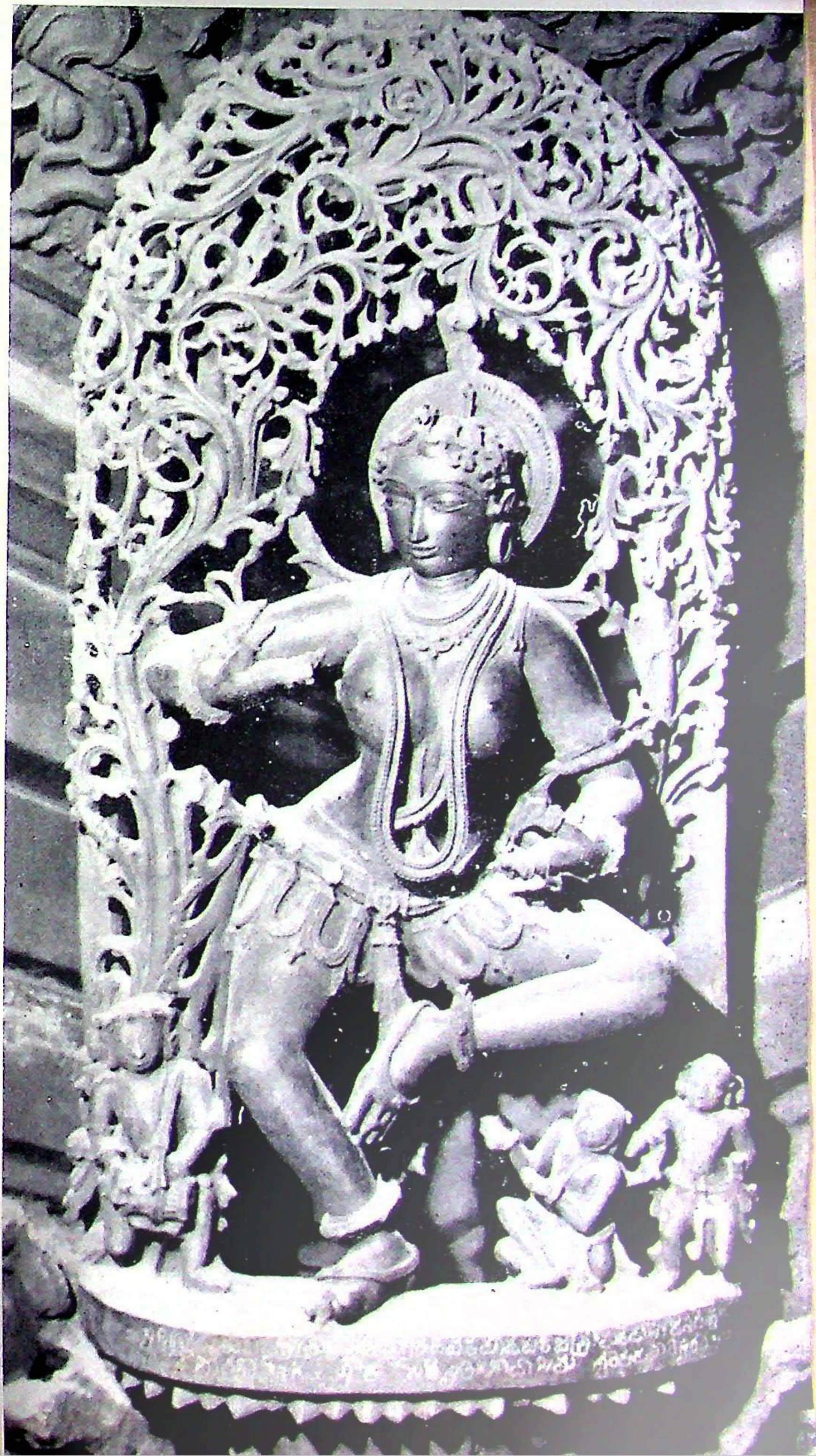


The 12th, 13th and 14th centuries saw the blossoming of the later Chalukyan (Hoysala) style in Mysore with the emphasis shifting from architecture to sculpture. Picture above is a general view of the Chennakesava Temple at Belur.

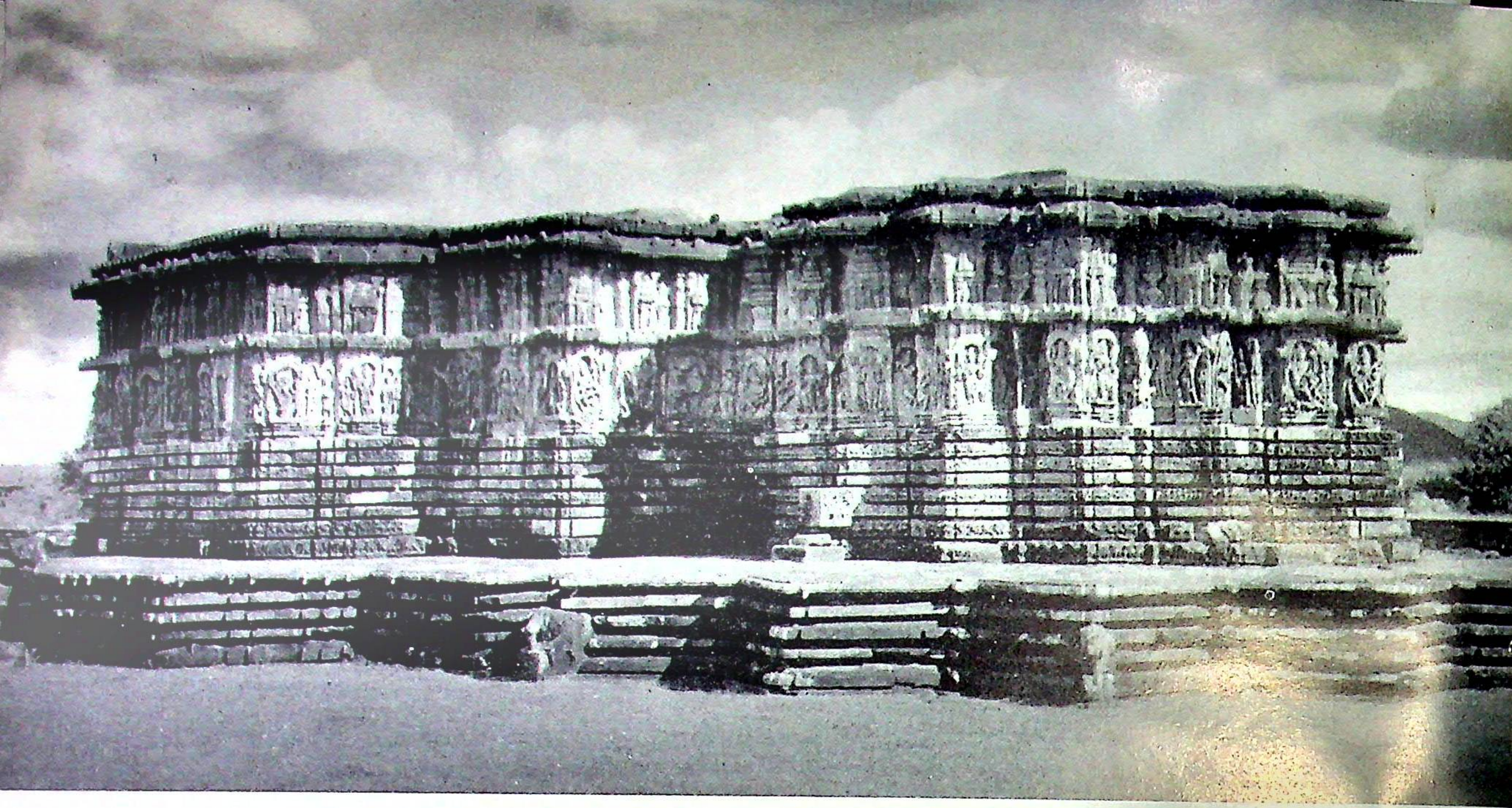


One of the most ornate ceilings in the pillared hall of the Belur temple is this one, a work of considerable skill.

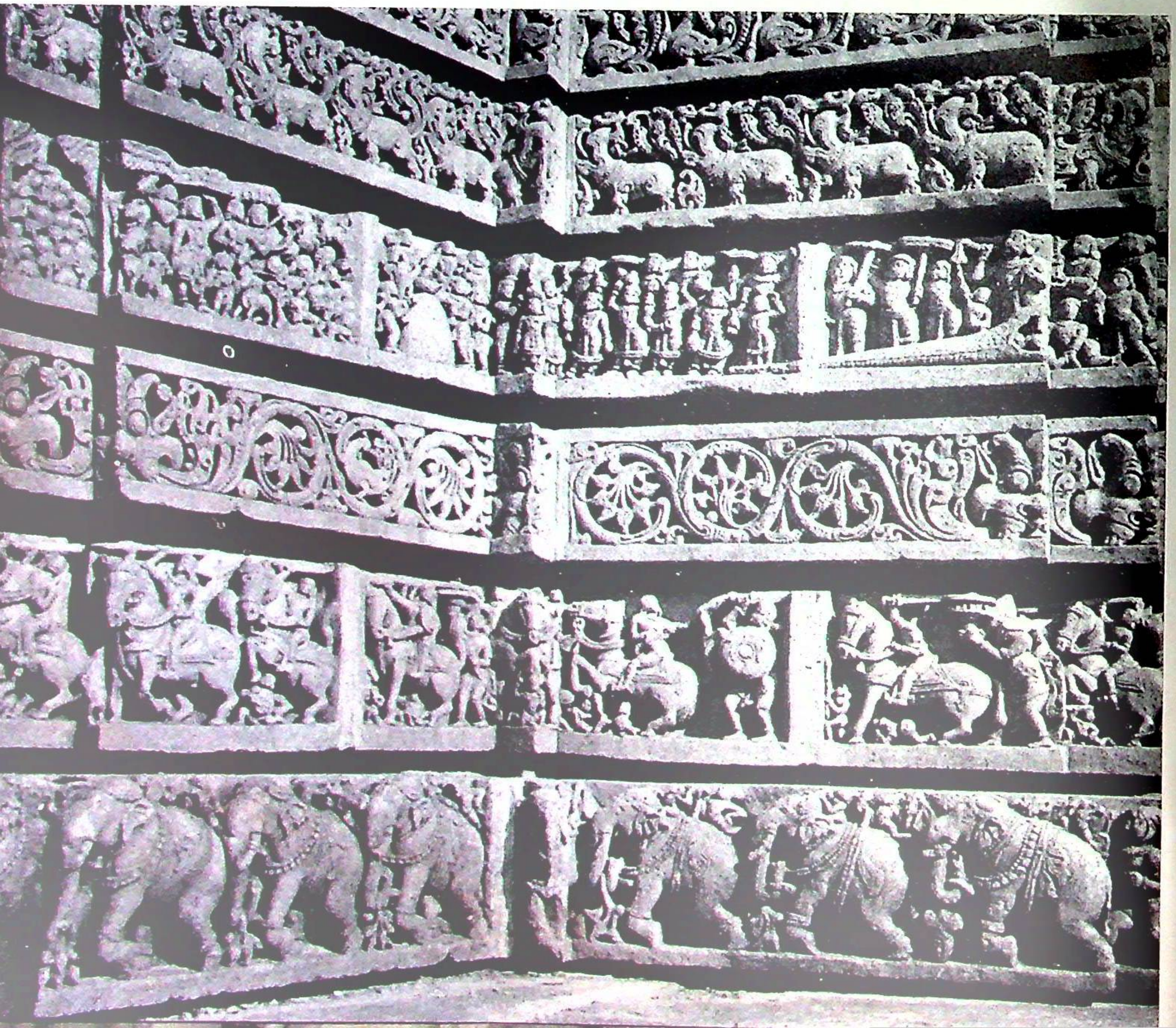




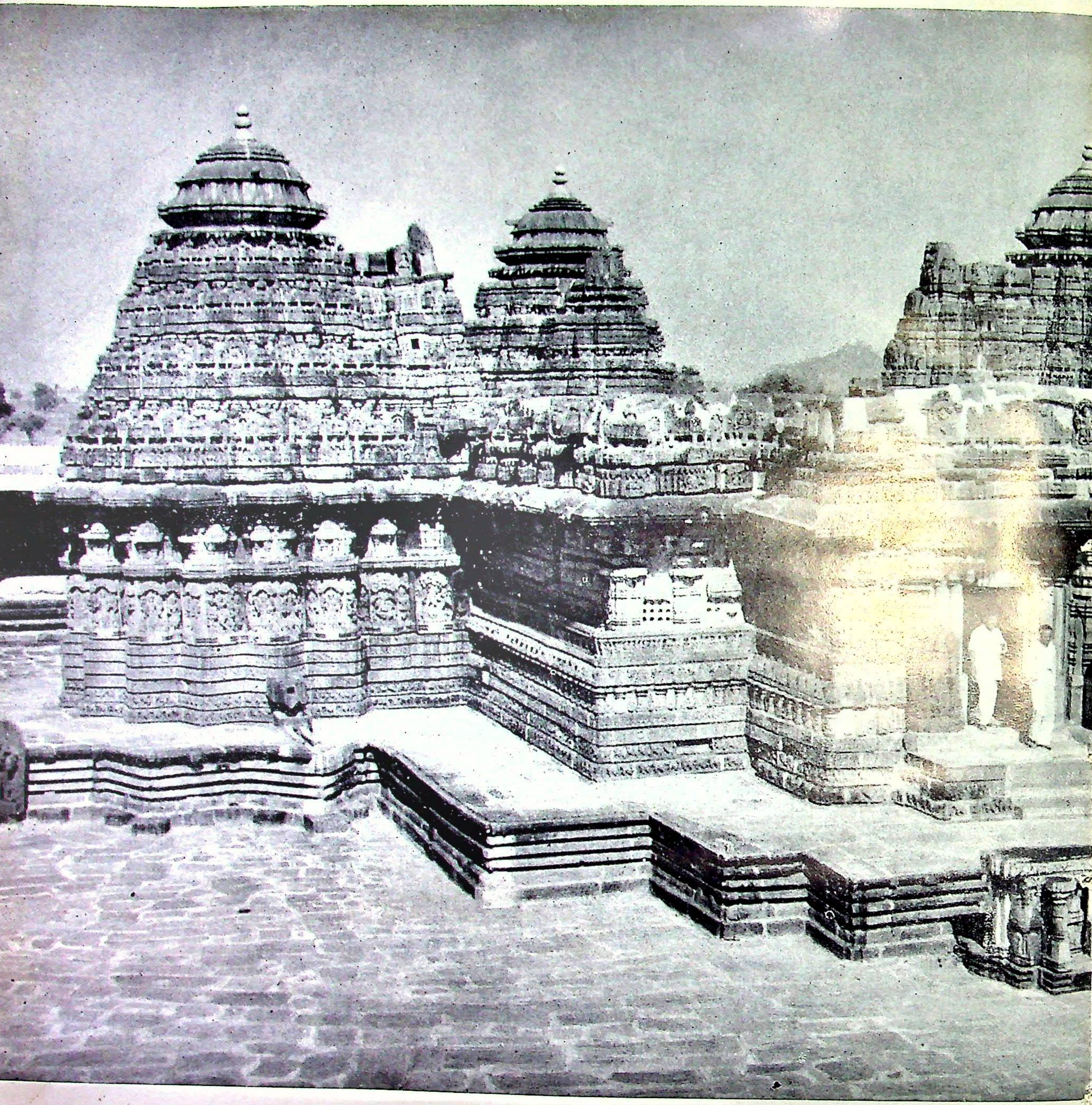
Attached to the four pillar capitals and the base of the ceiling are bracket-sculptures of dancing girls executed with a skill for craftsmanship unrivalled by any artist of the Mysore region.



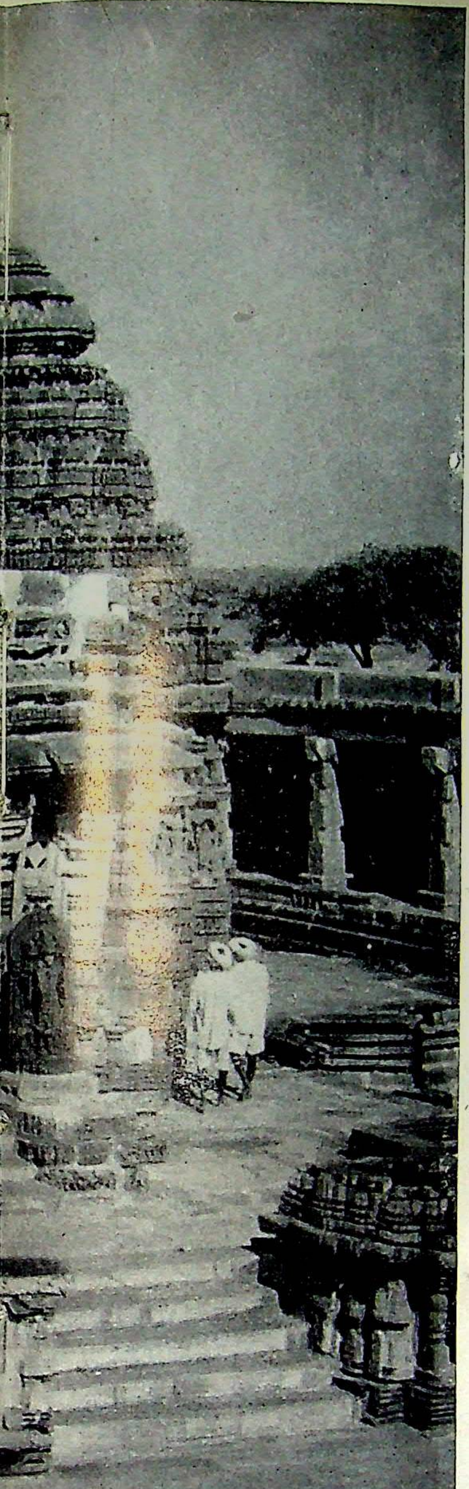
The 11th century Hoysalesvara Temple at Halebid is considered to be a masterpiece of ancient Mysore's builder-carvers. It is a twin-temple without towers and is particularly remarkable for its wall sculptures.



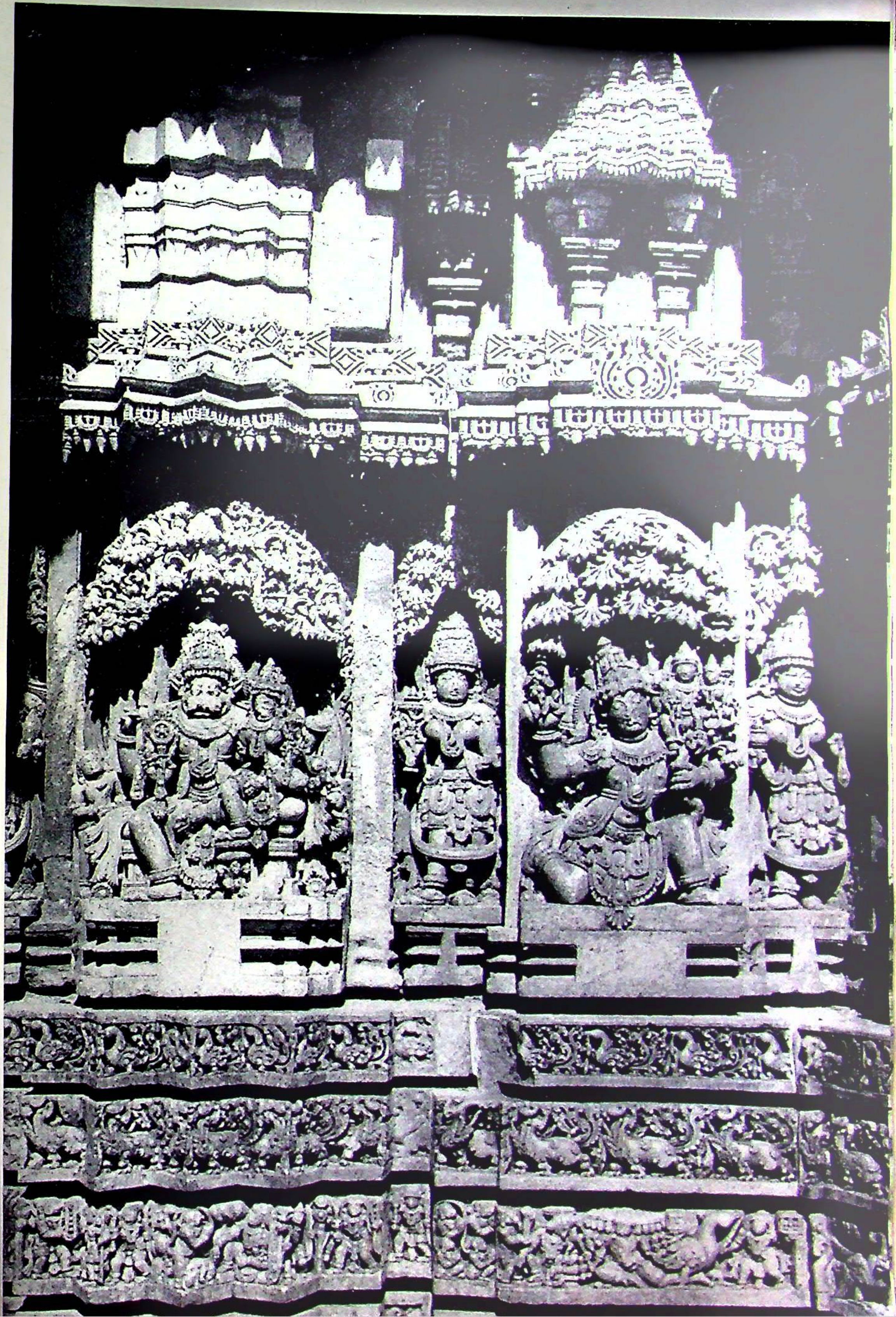
(Left and opp. page)—The long wall spaces of these stellate shrines unfold endless bands of exquisitely carved sculptures. For sheer wealth of sculptured embellishment the Hoysalesvara Temple stands unmatched.

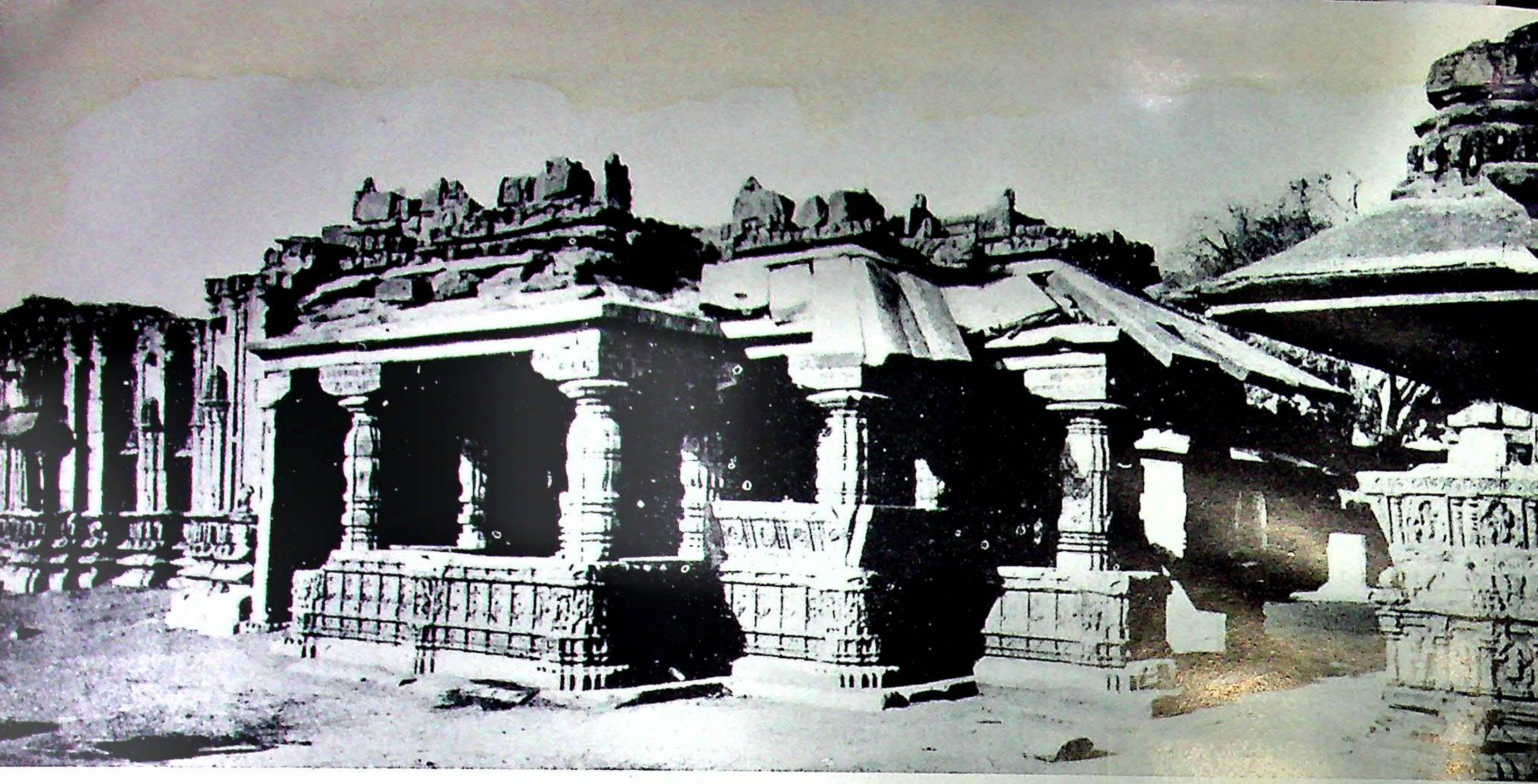


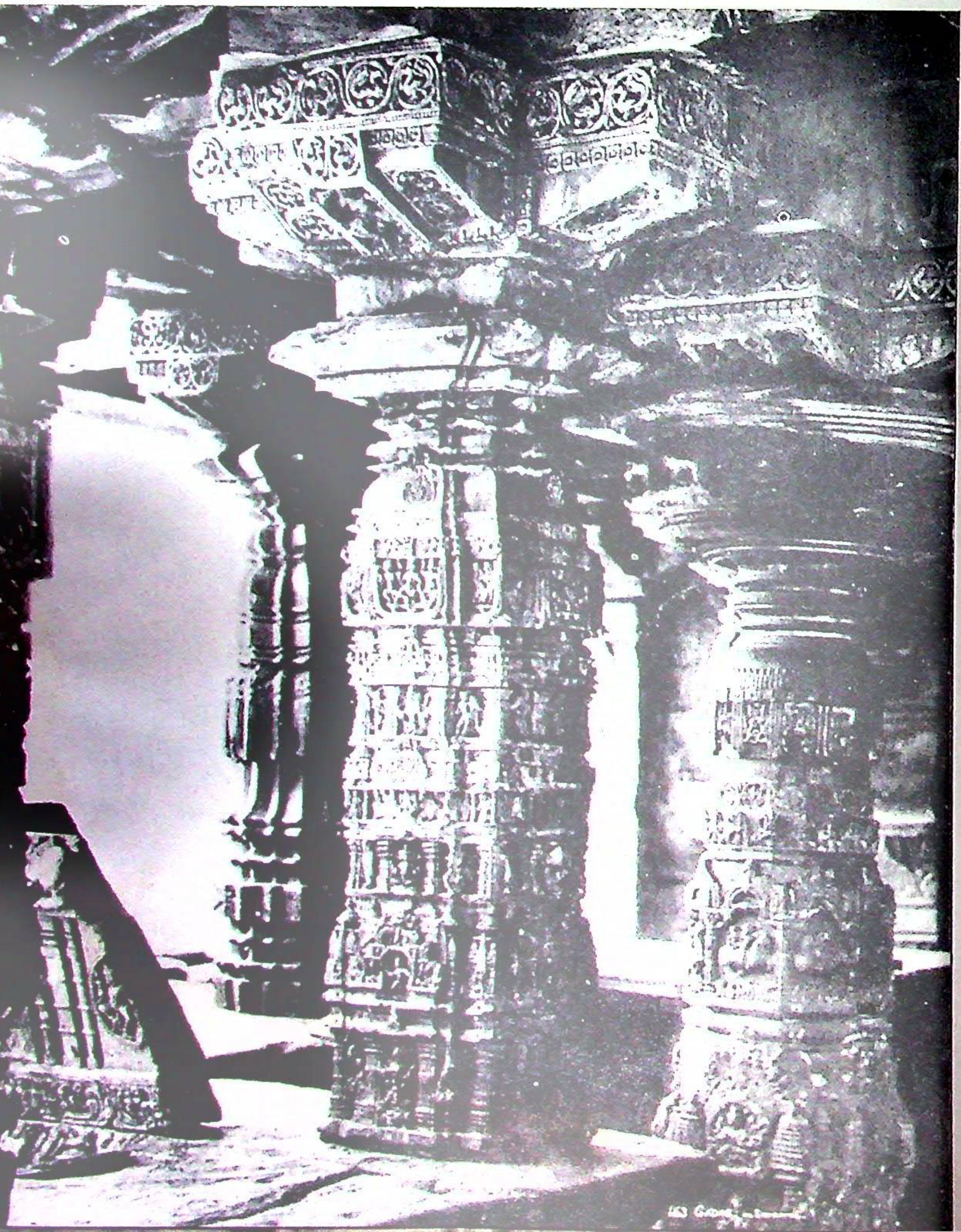
The Kesava Temple at Somnathpur (13th century) is a typical example of the fully evolved Hoysala style. It is a three-celled structure with a tower on each sanctum.



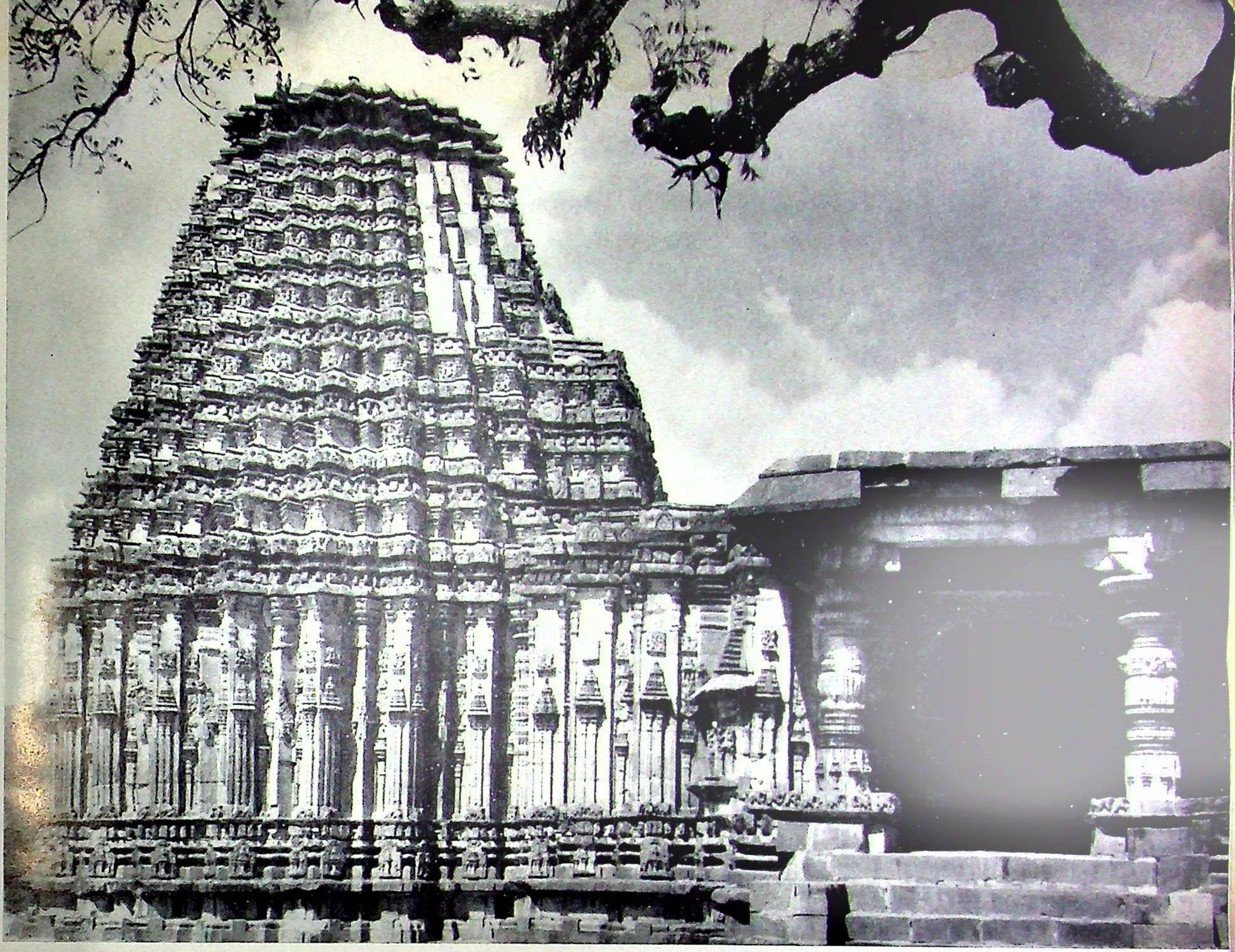
The indented walls on the exterior of the temple are covered with horizontal bands of sculptures culminating in large-size images of gods and goddesses, all exquisitely carved.



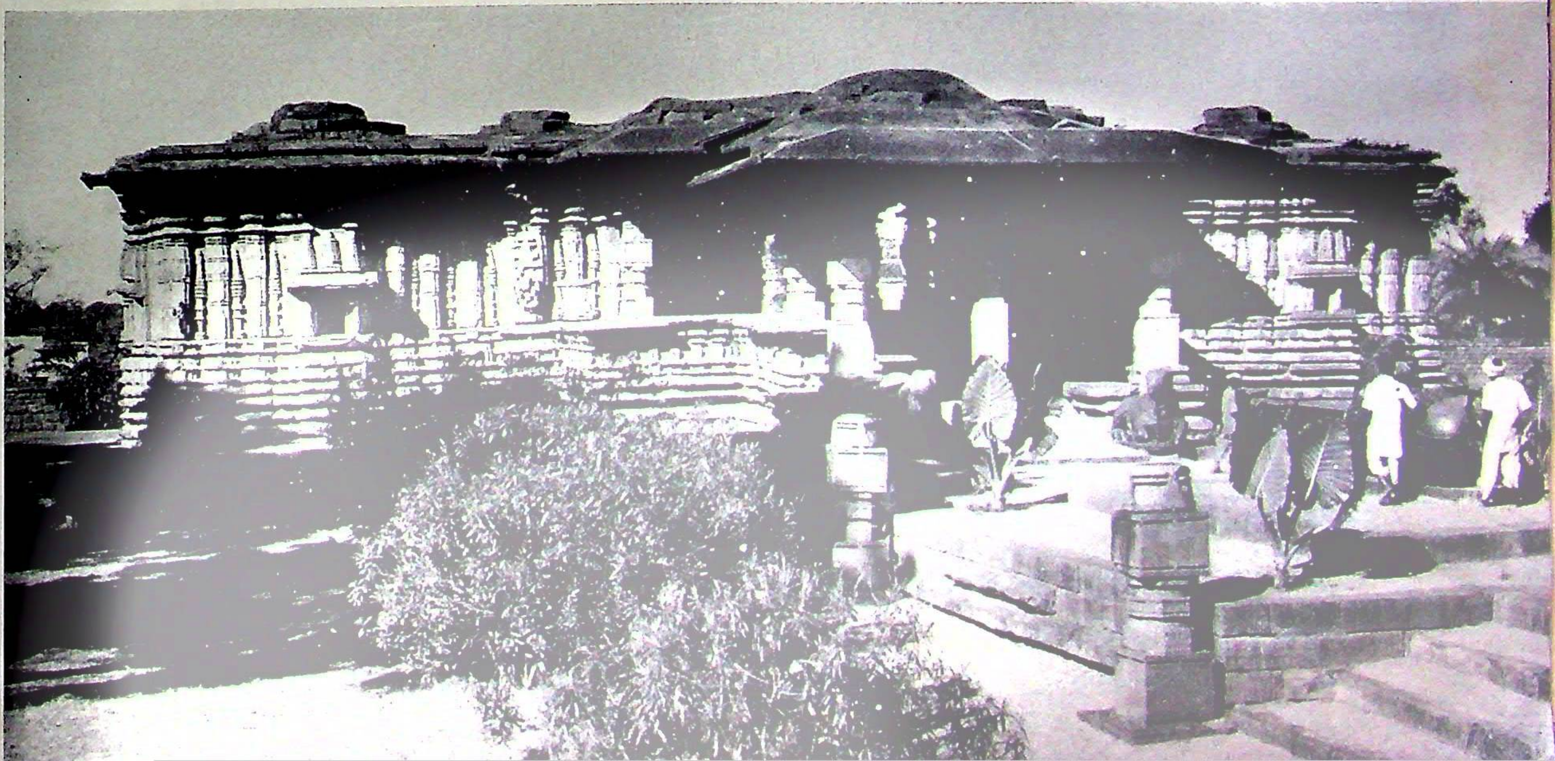


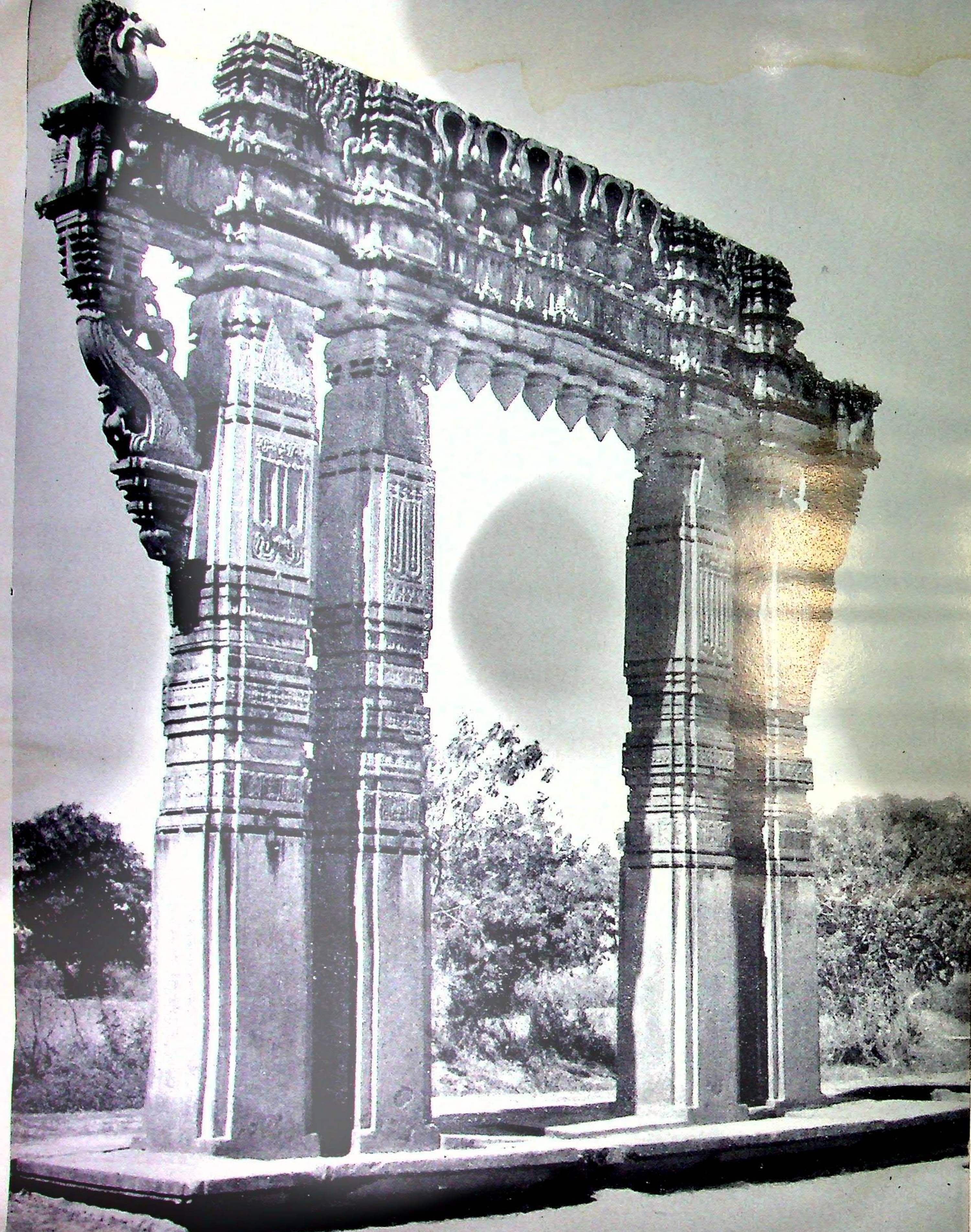


Among the important temples of the Chalukyan style in northern Mysore are the temples of Gadag notable for their projecting eaves and their heavily decorative interiors. Above is the general view of the Sarasvati Temple and, below, the pillared hall.



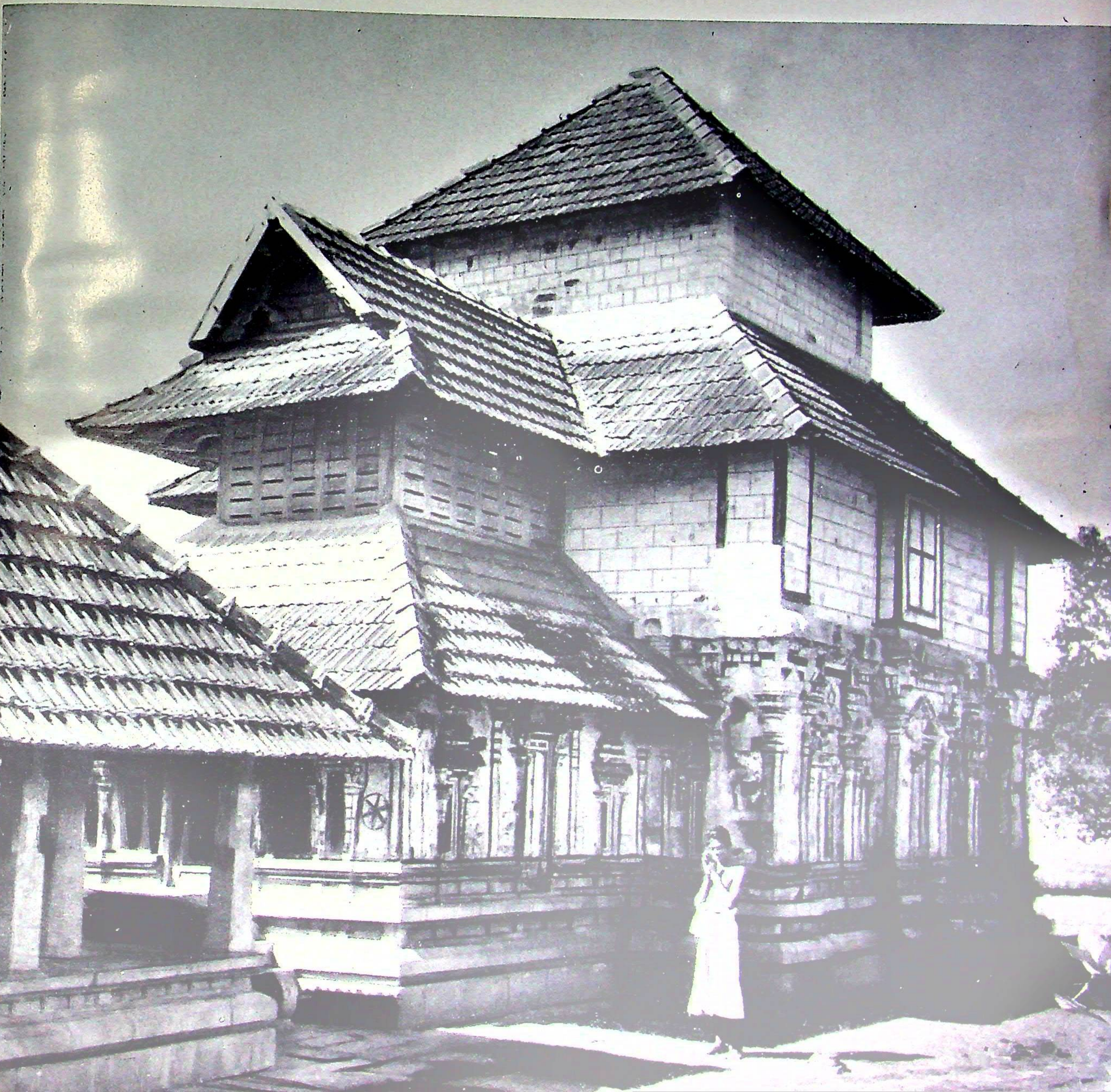
At Dambal is the 12th century Chalukyan temple of Dodda Basappa which is noteworthy for the total absence of figure sculptures on the outside walls. The Chalukyan style also influenced the religious architecture of Andhra. The thousand-pillared Siva temple at Hanamkonda (below) is a fine surviving example

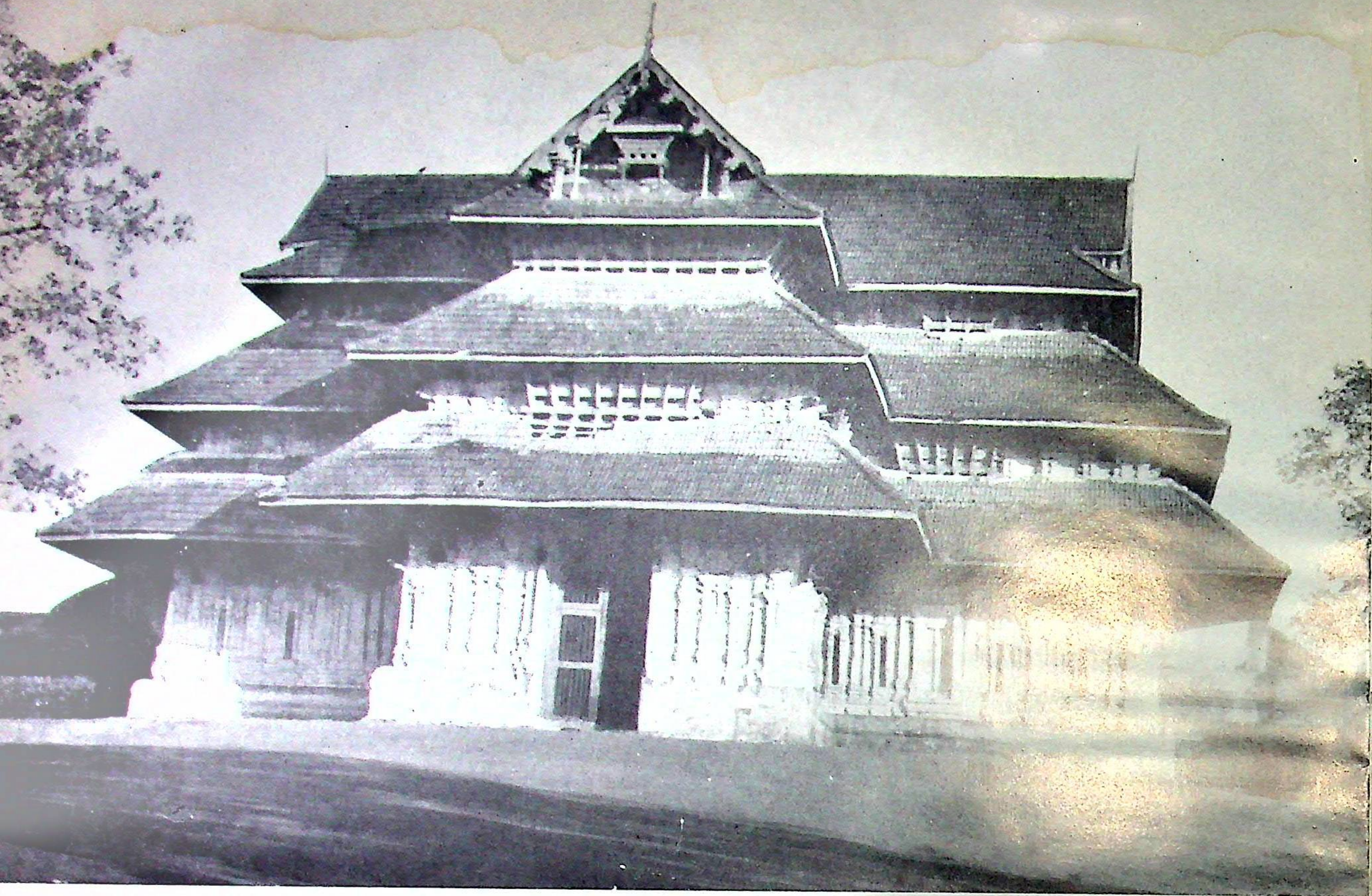


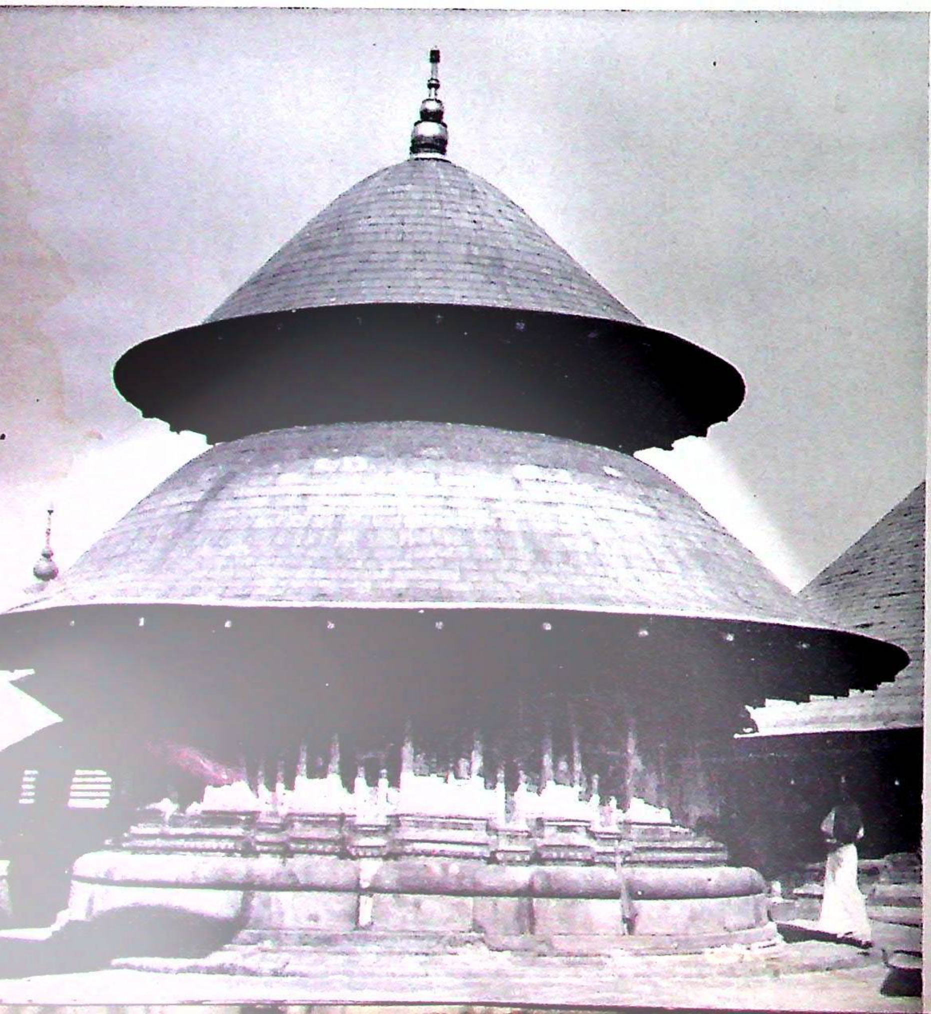


The Swambhava Temple at Hanamkonda, now in utter ruins, is remarkable for its still well-preserved gateways of which this is one.

The indigenous temple style of Kerala is characterized by its gabled roofs, made of timber and tiles. The temple gateways also conform to the same style, the tiled, gabled roofs rising tier upon tier as in this gateway of a temple at Trichur.

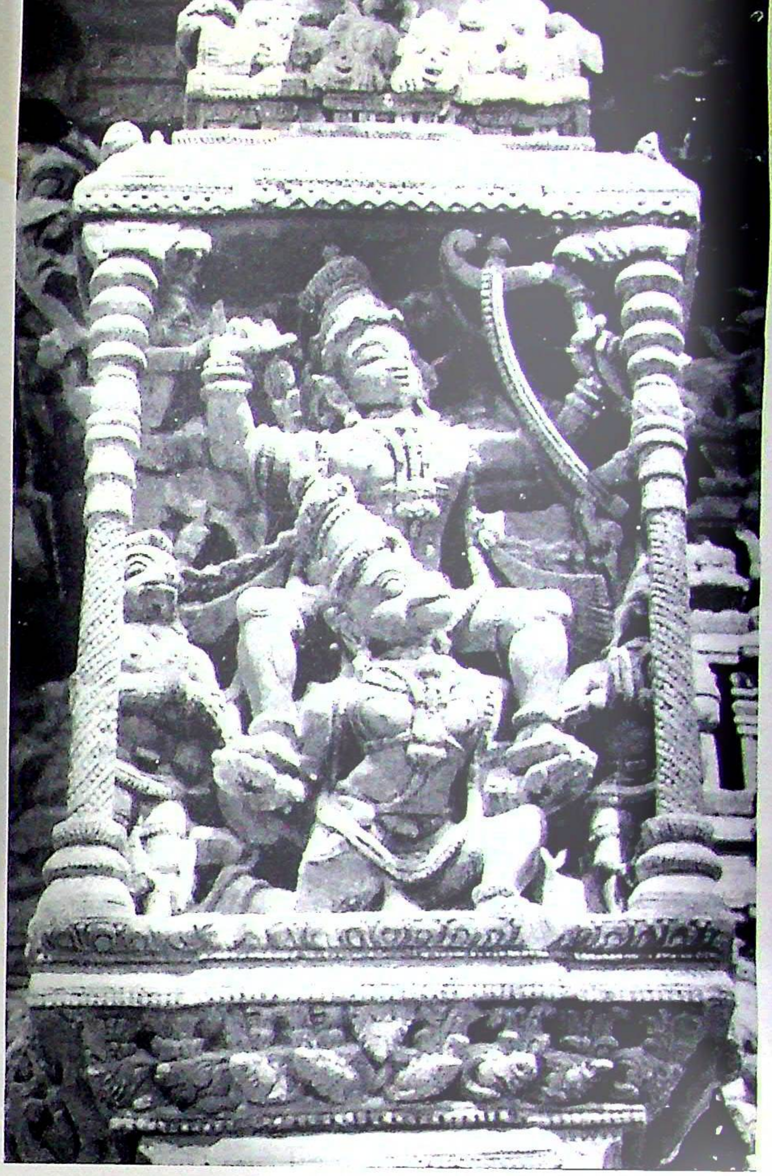




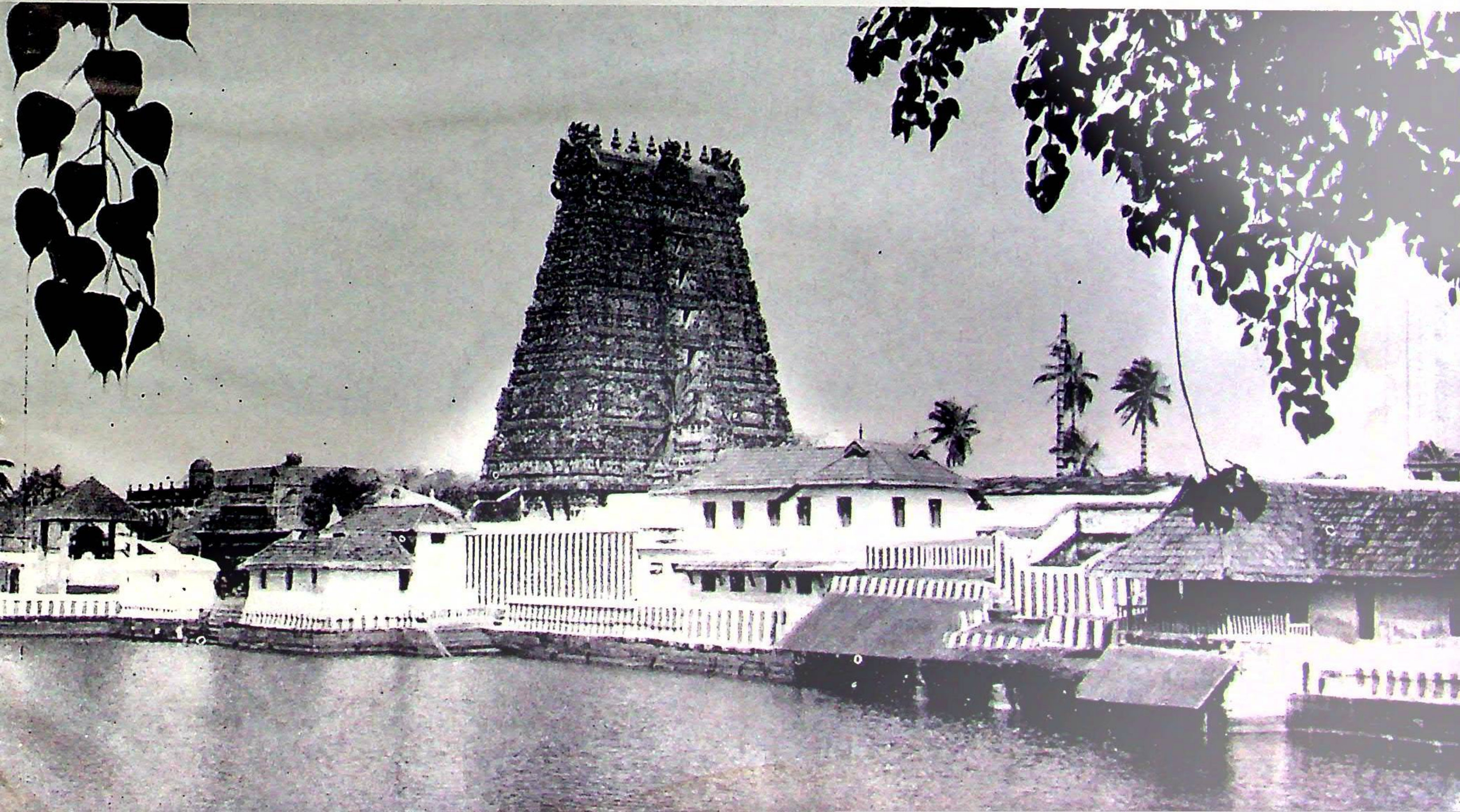


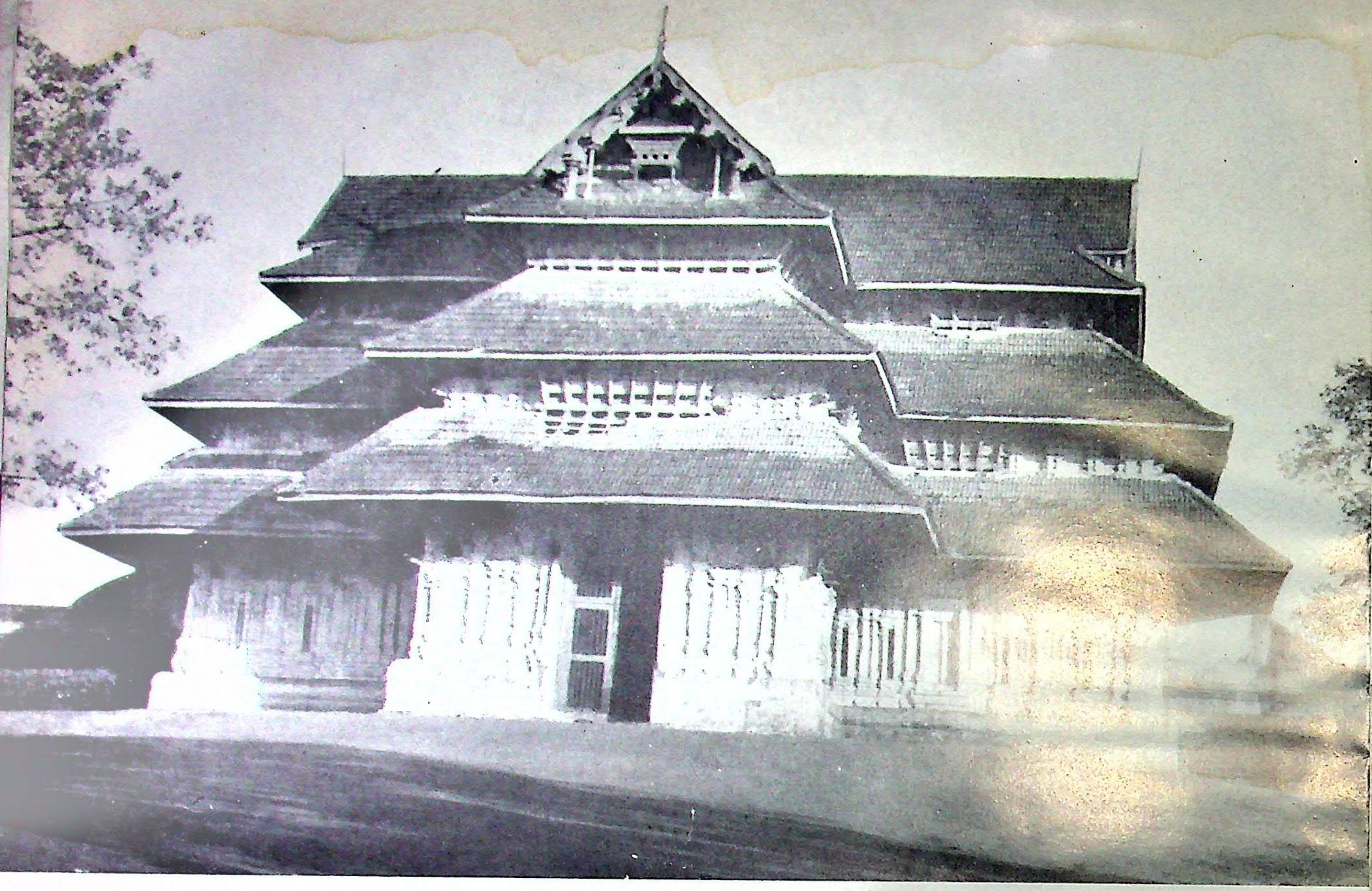
The Kerala temple can be square, rectangular or circular in plan, as these two temples from Trichur illustrate.

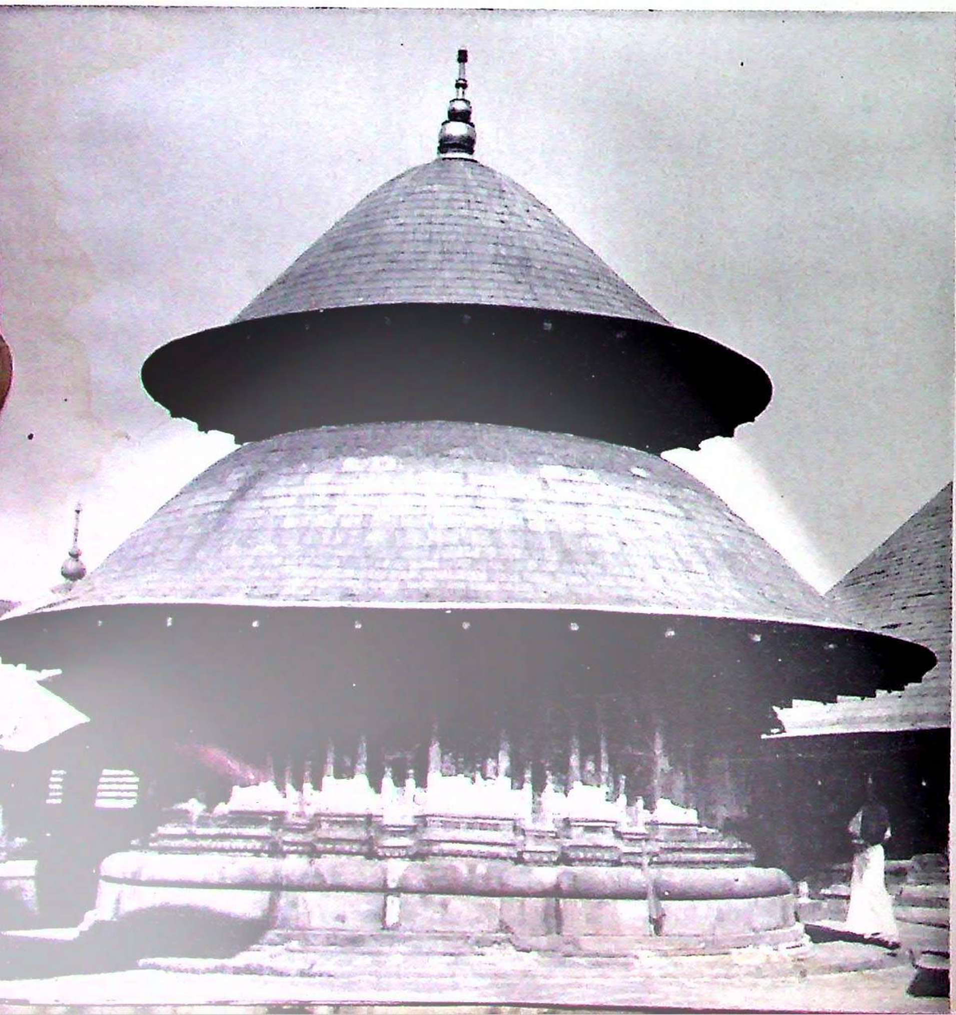
The Suchindram temple is noted for its fine sculptures based on mythological themes. This is a wooden carving from the processional car of the temple.



The southern part of the former Travancore State which was a meeting ground of Tamilian and indigenous cultures contains a few big temples of a predominently Dravidian style. The finest example is at Suchindram, (in Madras State), complete with *gopurams*, the sacred tank and pillared corridors.







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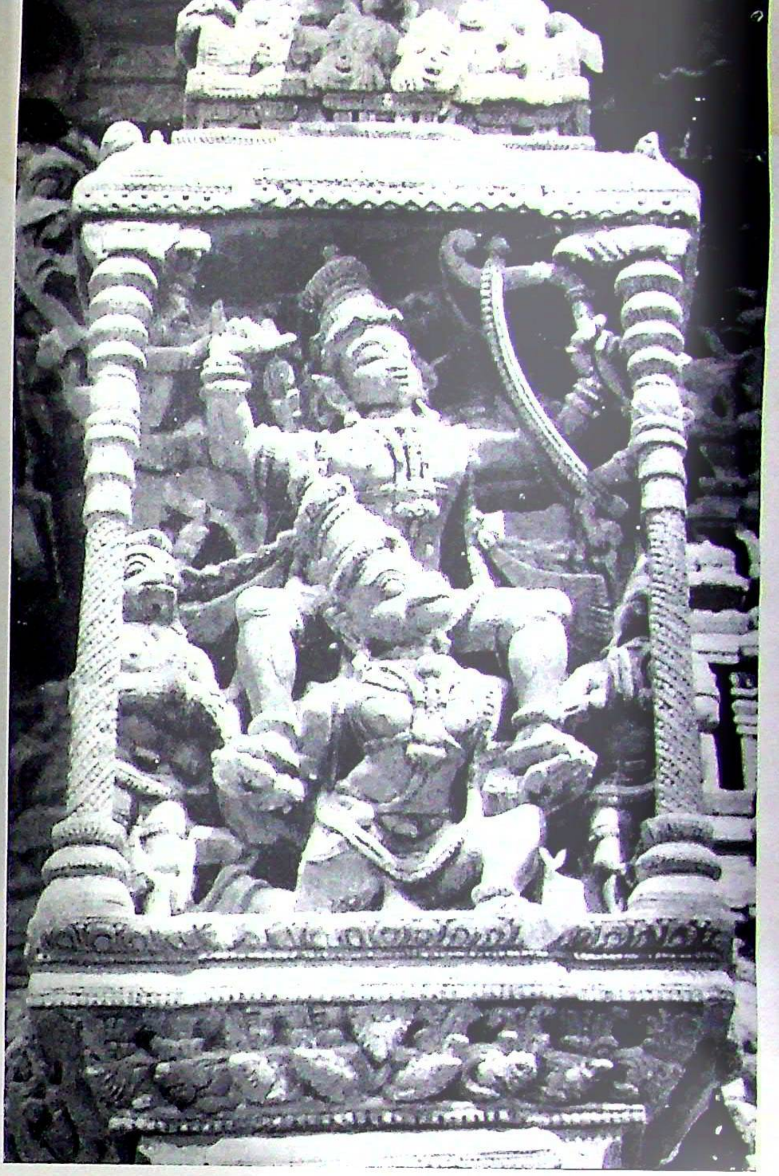

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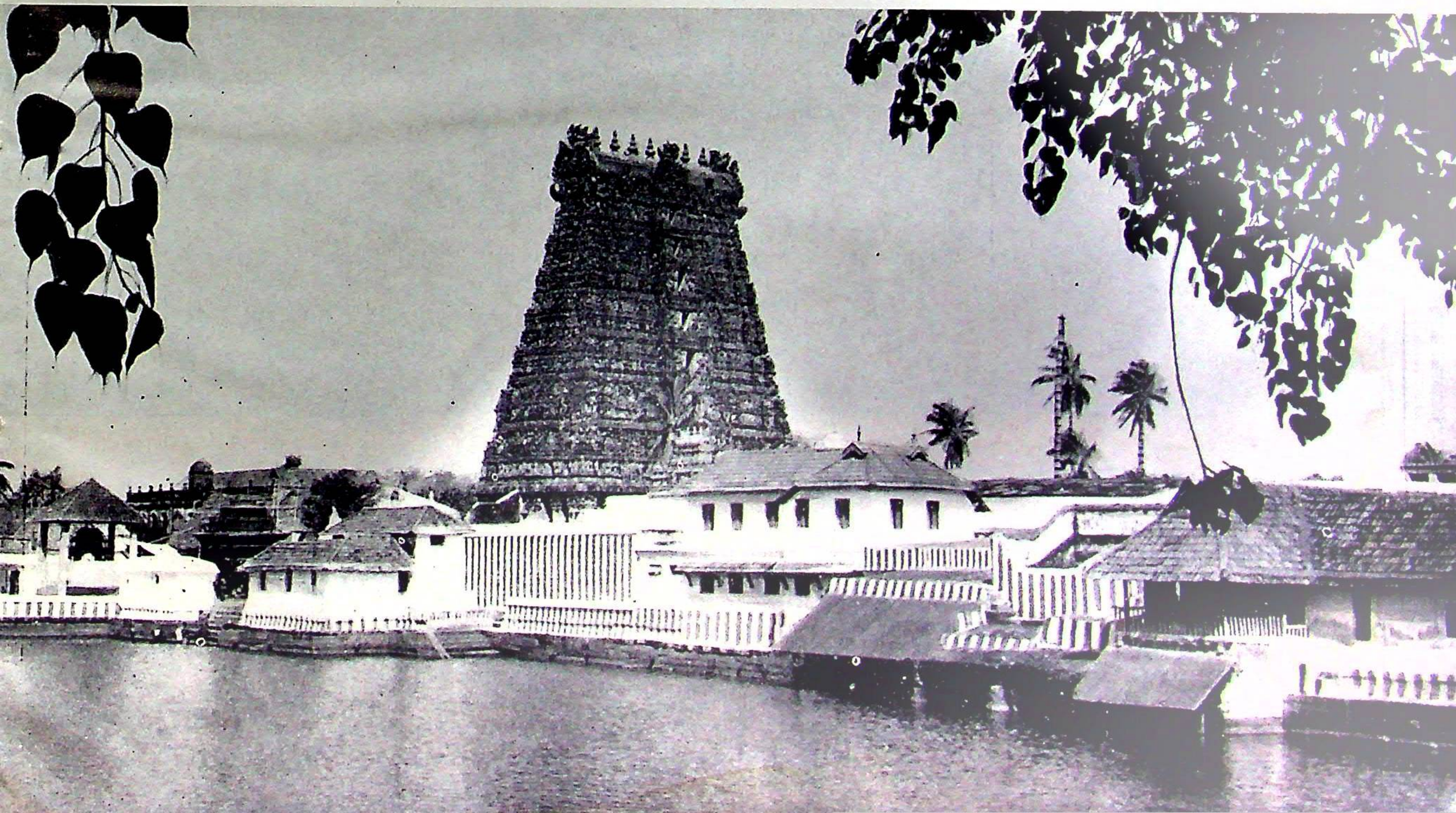

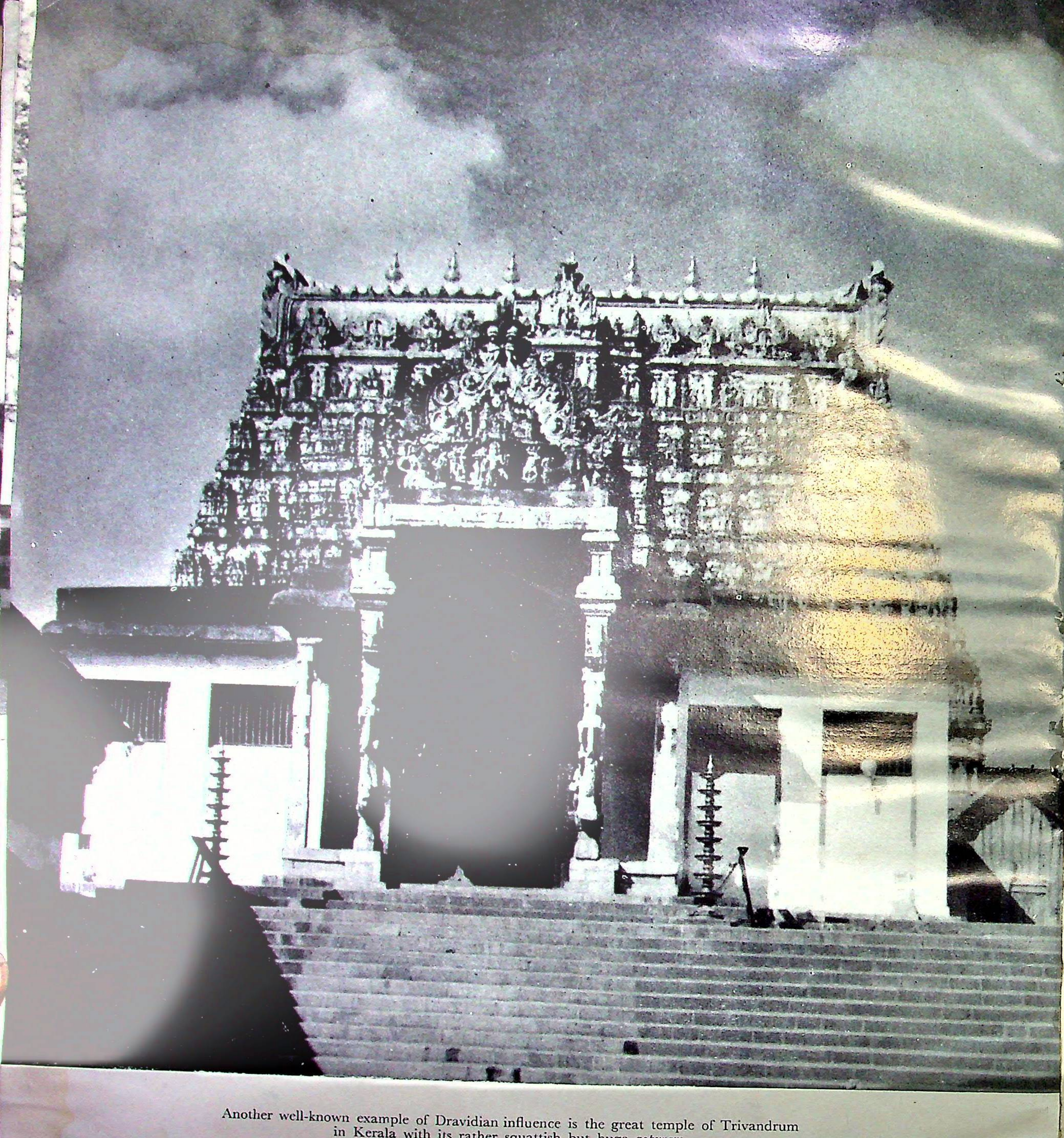

Another well-known example of Dravidian influence is the great temple of Trivandrum in Kerala with its rather squattish but huge *gopuram*.

Glossary

Aisle—Lateral divisions running at the sides of the nave or central compartment of a building.

Alcove—Vaulted recess in wall.

Amalaka—Also called *amalasila* or *amalasari*. Flat, fluted melon-shaped member usually at the summit of the Indo-Aryan type of *sikhara* or spire.

Ambulatory—Processional path round a shrine.

Antarala—Vestibule or chamber in front of the sanctum or cella.

Apse (Apsidal)—The circular termination of a structure.

Architrave—The beam or lowest division of the entablature which extends from column to column.

Ardha-Mandapa—Compartment in front of the main hall of a temple.

Attic—The upper story of a building above the main cornice; is derived from Athens or Attica.

Bali-Mandapa—Front hall in the Chalukyan style of temple.

Barrel-vault—Cylindrical form of roof or ceiling.

Bas-relief—Carving in low relief.

Basti—The name given for a Jain temple in the Mysore region.

Bhog-Mandapa—The refectory or dining hall of a temple in Orissa.

Bodigal—Also called *pushpa bhodhika* which means a projecting bracket or corbel of a capital in the Dravidian style of pillars.

Bracket—A projecting support, real or decorative.

Buttress—Support built against a wall.

Capital—Its Sanskritic equivalent is *siras*. It means the upper portion of a column or pilaster.

Ceiling—Covering surface under a roof.

Cella—A small chamber or sanctum of a temple in which is housed the object of worship.

Chaitya—is derived from the Sanskrit word *chita* which means a tumulus or burial mound. As the *stupa* or mound containing the relics of the Buddha was the chief object of worship in a Buddhist chapel, it was given this name.

Chaumukh—Four images placed back to back to face the four cardinal points.

Classical—Style of antiquity (of the standard of the ancient Greeks and Romans).

Cloister—Covered corridors or passages usually surrounding an open square.

Colonnade—Series of columns.

Corbel—Blocks of stone projecting from a wall or pier; brackets.

Cornice—Any crowning portion or projection.

Corridor—Passage in a building.

Cupola—Spherical roof (*sringa* in Sanskrit).

Deul—A generic name applied for a temple in Bengal and Orissa. But it is also used for the sanctuary with its tower.

Doric Order—The first and simplest order of Grecian architecture.

Dvara pala—Door-keeper.

Eave—Lower portion of a roof projecting beyond the face of the wall.

Entablature—Upper portion of a structure supported by a colonnade.

Facade—Front view or elevation of a structure.

Finial—Culminating portion of a pinnacle.

Flexured—Curved or bent.

Gable—Triangular end of a roof.

Gallery—Passage common to rooms in an upper storey.

Garbha-Griha—Means 'womb-cell' or sanctum sanctorum of a temple.

Gopuram—The tower on the gateway of a Dravidian temple.

Gothic—Pointed arch style prevalent in Western Europe from the 12th to the 16th century.

Gudha-Mandapa—Closed hall in front of the cella or main shrine; vestibule.

Harmika—The finial of a *stupa*.

Hinayana—Meaning 'Little Vehicle'. The earlier form of Buddhism in which the only object of worship was the *stupa*.

Hippogryph—Griffin-like creature with the body of a horse.

Hypostyle—Pillared hall.

Iconography—The art of making icons or images.

Incarnations of **Vishnu**—Ten in number, namely: Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Narasimha, Vamana, Parasurama, Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki. The last of these is still to come.

Jagmohan—Audience hall or compartment of an Orissan temple in front of the sanctuary.

Jataka—Stories of the former births of Buddha.

Jina—Jain Tirthankara or saint.

Kalasa—Ornamental pot found in finials and capitals.

Kalyana-Mandapa—An ornate pillared hall in the Dravidian temple, specially used to celebrate the symbolic marriage of the main deity with his consort.

Keel—Resembling the keel of a ship.

Laterite—Ferruginous rock.

Leogryph—Lion-griffin, also called *vyali*. A common theme in temple sculptures.

Lintel—Beam on top of a door or other openings.

Mahabharata—A great Hindu epic story.

Mahadvara--Outermost gate of a Chalukyan temple.

Maha-Mandapa—Large enclosed hall in front of the main shrine: also transepts.

Mandapa—Large open hall.

Mandovara—Central space on the outer wall of a Gujarat temple.

Mounts—On which the Gods and Goddesses ride. For instance, Siva's mount is bull; of Vishnu, the eagle; of Ganesh, the mouse; of Durga, tiger or lion; of Surya (Sun-god), chariot drawn by seven white horses etc.

Mukha-Mandapa—Front hall or colonnade in front of main shrine.

Mural—Wall decoration.

Nandi—The bull mount of the Lord Siva.

Nandi-Mandapa — The pavilion in which Nandi is installed.

Nat-Mandir—Dancing hall, usually the middle structure of an Orissan temple.

Nave—The central or main compartment of a building.

Niche—Recess in wall often resembling a miniature shrine in which a statue or a decorative sculpture is placed.

Order—In architecture this term signifies a column with its base, shaft and capital and the entablature which it supports.

Oversailing course—A method of constructing domes and arches where one course of bricks or stones projects over another course below. This method was in use before the idea of the keystone was introduced as a principle of construction.

Panchayatana—A temple in which four shrines are grouped symmetrically around the main shrine.

Panel—Recessed compartment in a wall or ceiling.

Parapet—Upper portion of a wall above the roof.

Parthenon—Greek temple at Athens (5th century B.C.), considered an ideal example of classical architecture.

Pediment—Triangular termination of a roof in the classic example.

Peristyle—Range of pillars surrounding a court or temple.

Pilaster—Square pillar projecting from a wall.

Plastic—Modelled or moulded.

Plinth—Lower portion or base of a building or column.

Porch—Structure (usually pillared) in front of a doorway.

Portico—Space enclosed within columns.

Prakaram—Open courtyard.

Pushkarani—Sacred tank attached to a temple.

Ramayana—A great Hindu epic story.

Ranga-Mandapa—Painted hall or theatre.

Ratha—Means a car in which the temple deity is carried in a procession.

Refectory—A dining hall in a monastery or temple.

Sabha-Mandapa—Assembly hall.

Shaft—Portion of a pillar between the capital and the base.

Stellate—Arranged like a star; star-shaped.

Strut—Wood or stone (carved or uncarved) set up to bear weight of the structure above.

Stucco—Plaster or cement for coating surfaces.

Stupa—A funeral relic mound enshrining the mortal remains of Buddha or his apostles.

Sukhanasi—Means vestibule. The term is used in Chalukyan architecture.

Tirthankara—A Jain saint.

Torana—An open gateway of a Hindu or Buddhist shrine.

Trimurthi—Hindu Trinity God in his three different aspects as Creator, Preserver and Destroyer.

Turret—A small tower.

Uru-Sringa—A turret attached to the main tower.

Vault—Arched covering.

Vedi—Altar.

Vestibule—An ante-room.

Vihara—A Buddhist or Jain monastery.

Vimana—Towered sanctuary.

Yaksha—A semi-divine being appearing in Buddhist, Jain and Hindu legends.

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